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The Grand Duchy Of Warsaw.

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THE GRAND DUCHY OF WARSAW

BY

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THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT THE THESIS PREPARED UNDER MY SUPERVISION BY

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CONTENTS

I. Short Sketch of Polish History before the Grand Duchy of Warsaw	1
II. The Establishment of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw	20
III. The Grand Duchy of Warsaw from 1807--1812	37
IV. The Breach of 1812	53
V. The Fate of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw as Decided at the Congress of Vienna, 1815	74
VI. The Poles Since 1815	84
VII. Bibliography	
A. Primary Material	88
B. Secondary Material	91
C. Bibliographical Notes	95



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I. A Short Sketch of Polish History before

THE GRAND DUCHY OF WARSAW

Among the many problems which demand the attention of the world today is that of Poland, and the outbreak of the Great War now going on in Europe has made this problem prominent. Ever since the final partition in 1795, the patriotic Poles have held closely in their hearts the idea of a reunited independent country. Uprisings in Russian Poland in 1831,¹ in Galicia in 1855,² and in Russia in 1863³ showed that these ideas were alive. All through the nineteenth century, revolts against their repression have proved that the spark of independence still glows. And now that this Great War threatens to change the political boundaries of Europe what dreams may the Poles not have in mind! But what nation now would undertake to help them? All of the Great Powers, England, France, Germany, and Austria have at one time or another professed to be their friend but one after the other has seen fit to fall away. The one occasion when their hopes and ambitions seemed about to be realized was at the time of the establishment of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw by Napoleon I in 1807.

To understand the situation thoroughly it is necessary to learn what the conditions were that led to the destruction of Poland; for there must be a cause inside the kingdom to allow such a large country to be divided at will by its neighbors. Ancient Poland in 830 lay between the Vistula and the Oder, and extended north a little beyond modern Posen and almost as far

1. Alexinsky, G. Modern Russia, 298.

2. Cambridge Modern History. Vol. XI, 46.

3. ibid.

south as the Carpathian mountains. ⁴ Early Polish history is divided into three periods: from 830 to 1386; from 1386 to 1572; and ^{from} 1572 to the time of its disappearance as a political state in 1795. Early in the first period warfare was the common occupation and the government was a rough military despotism. This was softened somewhat when in 855 Roman Catholicism was introduced into the country by missionary monks, and Poland can be regarded from that time as a staunch champion of the faith. It is interesting to notice that about five years later the Greek orthodox religion found its way into Russia, ⁵ and the differences of religion between these two countries was to be an important factor in their later history. The Poles extended their military control over the Bohemians, the Prussians, and the Saxons, and succeeded in Christianizing the Bohemians and the Prussians. The Saxons had been Christianized by Charlemagne in the ninth century. During the reign of Casimir I in the early eleventh century there were numerous revolts of the peasants resulting from the heavy taxes imposed upon them. ⁶ It is the persistent oppression of the peasants that constitutes one important factor in the loss of Poland. Their position became more degraded rather than more enlightened; thus the peasant sank while the noble rose and there was no intermediary class between to use its influence for the betterment of conditions. In this first period, foundations were laid for later political institutions. The "Magna Charta" of Poland, as it is called, arose when Louis of Hungary, in ascend-

4. Fletcher, J., History of Poland, 4.

5. Morfill, W. Russia, 25.

6. Fletcher, History of Poland, 15.

ing the Polish throne in 1370, took an oath to exercise limited power and to obey the will of the senate or assembly of nobles.⁷ But this apparent charter of freedom contained the seeds of fatal weakness. The laws of Poland had been formed into a regular code by Casimir II about a quarter of a century earlier.

The second period, from 1386 to 1572, is marked at the outset by the addition of Lithuania to Poland, consummated by the marriage of the daughter of Louis of Hungary and Jagellon, Duke of Lithuania; religious wars raged in Europe during this time and Poland became an asylum for the persecuted Christians. The various kings tried to obtain complete control, but jealousy was rife among the nobility and in time the king became a mere figure head. This jealousy was no doubt heightened by the union of Lithuania to Poland; on neither side were the nobles willing to give in politically or religiously. Lithuania had the Greek orthodox religion. The king could neither levy taxes nor call out an army, and in fact could issue no legislation. The revenue was completely in the hands of the diet and thus the king was deprived of even the powerful instrument money to be used for the purchase of authority.⁸

The entrance of the third period of early Polish history ushered in the elective system of kingship. Sigismund, the last of the Jagellons, left no male heir, and the crown of Poland was restored to the jealous subjects to do with as they liked. As they would not think of bestowing it on one of their own order,

7. Fletcher, History of Poland, 38.

8. *ibid.*, 62.

the crown became a prize for foreign princes, for there were still enough temptations connected with it to attract candidates. Poland was involved in wars with the Cossacks, Russia, and Sweden and at this time she triumphed over Russia to the extent that Russia's Tsar was carried as a prisoner to Warsaw.⁹ Later, Poland suffered defeat at the hands of the Swedes and Casimir III was forced to abdicate. It is said that Charles Gustevus of Sweden proposed a partition of Poland between Prussia and Austria, but the Tsar declared war against Sweden and the attention of Charles was diverted from his plan.¹⁰ In the reign of Casimer III the liberum veto, by which a single disagreement could stop the proceedings of the diet, first assumed a legal form.¹¹

Poland seemed to be in a state of great prosperity, but internal difficulties were destined to prove its ruin. The population was far from being homogeneous; religious differences also caused trouble, for the Poles were changing from a tolerant to a rigidly intolerant people.¹² The artisans had been eliminated from the diet and the peasants were being more and more oppressed. Polish towns became more wretched and trade was gradually ruined by the selfish class legislation of the Diet.¹³ Thus by the middle of the eighteenth century Poland was already launched far on the way to disasters which were to culminate in the three partitions and the final political extinction of the kingdom in 1795.

From the time that the crown became elective foreign interest

9. Fletcher, History of Poland, 79.

10. *ibid.*, 85.

11. *ibid.*, 89.

12. Lord, R. H., The Second Partition of Poland, 26.

13. *ibid.*, 27.

in Poland quickened. No doubt the neighbors hoped to add some or all of its territory to their own. France claimed to be interested as an ally and friend and her ties were strengthened by a marriage and by an old traditional policy. The daughter of the exiled king of Poland, Stanislaus, had become the wife of Louis XV.¹⁴ Furthermore, Poland was one of the pivots of French policy in Eastern Europe along with Sweden and Turkey, and might be used either to take the Hapsburgs in the rear or to checkmate Brandenburg--Prussia and Russia. Hence France endeavored to establish a predominant influence in Poland, but failed to see that the way to help Poland was to reorganize its government.

Austria was the chief rival of France for the friendship of Poland until about the middle of the eighteenth century. Her interest, however, was rather of a defensive nature and it was her main effort to keep Poland from attaching herself either to France or Prussia. There was no cause for unfriendly relations for they had several interests in common; their religion was the same, and frequent royal marriages bound them together. It would have been much more worth while for Austria to take a hand in the affairs of Poland than to allow Russia to get such a foothold; but jealousy prevented reason and diplomacy from being parties in the arrangements, and as long as Prussia and France could be kept out, Austria was satisfied.¹⁶

Prussia, on the other hand, was a persistent enemy, for the Hohenzollerns were rivals of Poland in the name of the Teutonia

14. Fletcher, History of Poland, 173.

15. Lord, The Second Partition of Poland, 37.

16. *ibid.*, 40.

Order for the country about the mouth of the Vistula. Could the Polish republic be broken up, the scattered possessions of Prussia might be bound together by the annexation of the Polish land. East Prussia and Pomerania could be united, and a portion of Great Poland would connect Silesia with East Prussia. The idea of the dismemberment of Poland had been alive in Prussia since the time of the Great Elector; and not only had this idea been entertained earnestly, but it was a traditional policy of Prussia to prevent any hostile power from gaining control.¹⁷ It was not in a very gracious manner, then, that Prussia objected to the establishment of French and Russian candidates on the throne of decaying Poland.

Russia seemed to be equally anxious with Prussia to keep other nations out. She felt that her interests were the most important and she looked with jealous eyes toward Poland for nationalistic reasons. Lithuania had once appropriated a part of western Russia, and the Muscovite rulers and heirs felt bound to recover their ancient home. Another important reason was ^{the feeling} that these peoples were of the Orthodox religion and should be freed from the oppression of Roman Catholicism.¹⁸ The political and nationalistic motives were not a valid excuse, for the races in Poland had been so long separated from their Russian brothers that hardly a trace of the old political resemblance remained. The only traditional motive that remained was that of religion. Poland had developed into an extremely intolerant country and the

17. Lord, The Second Partition of Poland, 40.

18. *ibid.*, 41.

Orthodox clergy besought St. Petersburg for deliverance. When the government did interfere, the motive was for political predominance. Russia claimed that her interference was in self-defense, since although Poland was weak, she might make trouble for Russia if she fell into the hands of Russia's enemies.¹⁹ It was through Polish territory only that the other nations in Europe could hope to approach Russia by land; and claims on Polish friendship were strong in 1719-20, when George I of England was anticipating a war with Russia. Again during the wars of 1735-39 and 1741-43 when the western nations wished to strike at Russia they tried to ally themselves to Poland. It was clearly prudent, then, on the part of Russia that she obtain control over Poland, either as a gateway to, or a barrier against, the West.

The idea of the dismemberment of Poland had been common among the powers of Europe for a hundred years before it occurred.²⁰ Peter the Great seems to have considered a partition and during the Seven Years' War it was Russia's intention to acquire Courland from Poland in exchange for the conquered province of East Prussia.²¹ Under Catherine II, events worked up to a climax which resulted in the first partition and finally in the extinction of Poland. Catherine II has had much of the blame for interfering in Polish affairs, but as we have seen, she did not begin the deed but consummated it. One of her policies was to govern the Republic by influence and still to preserve its integrity; another was to annex territories from time to time, but this would

19. Lord, The Second Partition of Poland, 43.

20. *ibid.*, 44.

21, *ibid.*, 44.

necessitate considering Austria and Prussia.²² Each country must have territory to enlarge and make complete its empire, and Russia, under Catherine II, whose exorbitant claims overbalanced the others, took the lead. Catherine seemed ready to adopt either of the policies, just as the circumstances might permit. She began interfering in Polish affairs in 1763, but did not take up the campaign until after the death of Augustus III, the last of the Saxon kings, which occurred in the same year.²³ She was urged to do so by the Czartoryskis before Augustus III died. The popularity of these brothers with the Saxon king had been destroyed through jealousy, and they immediately appealed to Catherine for help in reforming the Polish Constitution, promising in return to recognize the Imperial title of Peter the Great and his successors, a thing which the Republic had persistently refused to do.²⁴ Now that Catherine had a hold on one of the most influential families in the Republic, and the throne was empty, she struck a hard blow at the tottering state. Frederick of Prussia was an ally of Catherine II, and she succeeded in putting a candidate of her own on the throne, who must obey her because she could cast him aside if he ventured to oppose her. Stanislaus Poniatowski attempted reform, but Catherine saw to it that no change for the better should be made which might hinder her plans.

While the Czartoryskis had shown their weaker nature in humbling themselves before Catherine, they did not hesitate to strike back,²⁵ but their station before the law was not equal to hers:

22. Lord, The Second Partition of Poland, 46.

23. Cambridge Modern History, Vol. VI, 666.

24. ibid., 200.

25. ibid., 667.

Catherine could command and be obeyed; the Czartoryskis could only remonstrate. The patriotic Poles rebelled but Catherine only tightened her grip. Just at the time when the Empress seemed to have achieved success, Turkey, urged on by France and Prussia, declared war on Russia in behalf of Poland.²⁶ Catherine, however, was successful in the war. Prince Henry of Prussia was at the court of Russia at this time. Mention of a partition of Poland had been made before this, and during a conversation in which Prince Henry and Catherine were the participants, Catherine suggested that everyone should help himself.²⁷ A partition treaty was signed in 1772 between Russia and Prussia, Austria holding off until in the summer. Poland lost about one third of its territory; Russia obtained the palatinates of Polock, Witebsk and Mscislau, as far as the rivers Dwina and Dnieper; Austria had for her share Galicia and a portion of Podolia and Little Poland as far as the Vistula; Prussia obtained Polish Prussia, with the exception of Dantzic and Thorn and their territory, and part of Great Poland as far as the river Notec.²⁸

Each of the three powers would now have to watch the others and maintain "Polish integrity," which Austria had been the first to violate. Poland became, in practice, a tributary state of Russia. A perpetual Council of State under the presidency of the king, in which executive power was vested when the Diet was not in session, was established. The officers of the crown could be dominated and all branches of public service were brought un-

26. Cambridge Modern History, vol. VI, 668.

27. ibid., 669.

28. Fletcher, History of Poland, 277.

der a common direction. Administration for the first time had some unity and vigor.²⁹ The army was reformed according to the Prussian plan and a national system of education was founded. Although Poland had greatly improved along financial and military lines, she had not come up to the standard which Catherine was willing to allow. Thus Poland was ill prepared for the second great crisis in 1792. A new event occurred which had to be reckoned with, and that was the rise of a new social middle class, well-to-do and enterprising, one which would be of immense importance in the last struggle for independence.³⁰

Events which led up to the second partition were set in motion by the Russo-Turkish war of 1787 to 1792. Catherine II sought the alliance of the Poles and asked for recruits for her army. Prussia and Austria had exchanged places in alliance with Russia, and Prussia likewise begged for Polish favor, trying to make clear that to ally themselves with Russia would certainly insure more Russian domination in Poland. Poland accepted the alliance with Prussia and Russian influence was, for awhile, overthrown.³¹ The liberum veto was abolished and the Russian troops withdrawn from Polish territory. No haste was made in the adoption of the reforms and a valuable opportunity was allowed to pass. It is a characteristic of the Poles at almost any crisis of their country's history that they are slow to act, and thus they lose what would have been of immense profit to them. But the patriots and the mercantilists did not wish to give up any

29. Lord, The Second Partition of Poland, 58.

30. *ibid.*, 59.

31, Cambridge Modern History, Vol. VIII, 525.

more of their territory, and especially to Prussia, and Polish tradition was opposed to the idea of a hereditary king, for that was contrary to Polish liberty; furthermore, the nobles hesitated to admit urban delegates to the Diet.³² Prussia was chagrined by the obstinacy of Poland and would no doubt find it to her interests to repudiate the alliance and revert to her old policy of keeping Poland weak.³³ The Diet, which had met at Warsaw, continued to discuss reform, but no beneficial decisions could be made because every decision harped back to unanimity of vote. A slight coup d'etat was undertaken and Stanislaus brought forth plans for a new Constitution. Followed by most of the Deputies, he proceeded to the Cathedral to take the oath to support the Constitution, so that a greater solemnity might be added to this important step.

Poland was triumphant. Executive powers were to be in the hands of a hereditary king and six responsible ministers; and legislation was to be vested in a Diet of two houses. The liberum veto was suppressed.³⁴ The maintenance of the Constitution of May depended, however, on the action of the neighboring states. Austria had reverted to the policy of a strong Polish state, and stood ready to oppose the ambitions of both Prussia and Russia,³⁵ for such a state would strengthen Roman Catholicism and revive Austrian influence in northern Germany. In 1791, Prussia and Austria signed a treaty agreeing to guarantee the integrity and the free Constitution of Poland; to invite the elector of Saxony

32. Cambridge Modern History, Vol. VIII, 525.

33. ibid., 526.

34. ibid., 527.

35. ibid., 529.

to accept Polish offers to the crown; and to prohibit a prince of any of the three powers from ascending the Polish throne.³⁶ As long as this agreement held, Russia could not act. Early in 1792, Russia signed a treaty with Turkey and thus Catherine could turn her attention toward Poland. The French Revolution burst forth into a foreign war and the monarchs were drawn together to aid Austria, on whom the war had been declared. Catherine made distinct and private agreements with Prussia and Austria to prevent opposition to her designs on Poland.³⁷ Word was sent to Poland that reforms must cease, and shortly afterward a Russian army entered Poland. Prussia withdrew her support and once more Poland was in the hands of Russia. Stanislaus had signed the act of the confederates, and patriot officers were discharged and the army disbanded.³⁸ Fletcher seems to think Stanislaus "a hero in words at least."³⁹ He seemed to be willing to sacrifice himself for his country but his actions did not give evidence of it. Prof. Richard Lodge says, "Stanislaus in spite of his oath had never joined the army nor left Warsaw. He was neither fool nor hero, and he would not commit himself to what he knew to be a hopeless struggle."⁴⁰ No doubt he acted as well as he could considering the position in which he was: Catherine and her spies were on one side of him, and the jealous nobility of Poland on the other. But when he had the support of so many of his subjects at the time of the Constitution of May 3, it seems

36. Cambridge Modern History, Vol. VIII, 530.

37. Fletcher, History of Poland, 308.

38. ibid., 311.

39. ibid., 310.

40. Cambridge Modern History, Vol. VIII, 532.

almost inexplicable that he should have given up. One cannot but think that the roots of his patriotism flourished only when he had the support of another power. But however that may be, he signed Poland away to Russia. The Prussian troops entered Great Poland in 1793, Prussia having announced that Jacobinism was gaining ground.⁴¹ Russia demanded that the Diet sign the treaty for the partition, which was done under armed compulsion, September 5, 1793.⁴² Catherine advanced her frontier into the middle of Lithuania and Volhynia; Frederick obtained the remaining portion of Great Poland, and a part of Little Poland.⁴³

The partition of the rest of the unfortunate country was inevitable. Russia ruled Poland by severe military means, and did not intend that the rebellious Republic should ever gain the upper hand again. The Poles revolted, but they were utterly defeated by Russia and Prussia. The revolution in France encouraged the two powers to put an end to the Polish uprisings. The German powers, Austria and Prussia did not succeed in restoring the French king on the throne. They decided to embark on another campaign against France in 1793; Prussia was to be indemnified by Catherine with Polish territory;⁴⁴ Austria was to exchange the low countries for Bavaria.⁴⁵ England now came out of her reserve and opened a correspondence with the allies, but she refused to have anything to do with the war when it was learned that Poland was to suffer. Early in 1793 negotiations were again opened.

41. Fletcher, History of Poland, 312.

42. *ibid.*, 320.

43. *ibid.*, 321.

44. Eversley, Lord, The Partitions of Poland, 147.

45. *ibid.*, 149.

Fox fought bitterly against war; Burke said that there was no government in France with which to ally themselves, and that Poland might be so partitioned that the balance of power in Europe might not be disturbed. England entered the war for the port of Dunkirk.⁴⁶ All three armies met with reverses, and the duplicity of the agreements of Austria with England and Russia^{ed} turn^{ed} the attention of all except England away from France. Austria said that if England would not consent to the Bavarian exchange, she would look for indemnity in Poland; on England's refusal to recognize the exchange, Austria replied that her troops would be withdrawn from France.⁴⁷ At the same time Catherine was informed that the scheme of exchange had been given up and that Austria now looked for indemnity both in France and in Poland.⁴⁸ The Prussians, in 1794, became alarmed at the uprisings in Poland against the Russians and neglected to send their army to aid England in spite of the fact that England's allowance for a Prussian army continued to come. The English minister finally informed the home government of the true nature of affairs, and the allowance ceased.⁴⁹

The Poles had been aroused because of the Russian policy with regard to soldiers on Polish territory; Russian soldiers had been kept there at the expense of the Poles.⁵⁰ The situation was not so very unlike that of the American colonists, who had supported British soldiers before the American revolution. Dis-

46. Eversley, The Partitions of Poland, 160.

47. *ibid.*, 167.

48. *ibid.*, 166.

49. *ibid.*, 188.

50. *ibid.*, 173.

content was growing and French victories stimulated the Poles to definite action. They called Kosciusko to the front as leader of the new national movement and the Russians were driven from Warsaw.⁵¹ When Catherine heard of the revolt she came to terms with the Turks as quickly as she could, but it was not until in the summer of 1794 that she could give her attention to Polish affairs.⁵² She immediately claimed the assistance of Prussia. Austria was consumed with jealousy at the thought of Prussia's securing a share in Poland again, and she set about making peace with France so that she might look toward Poland also.⁵³ The Empress hinted at a share if the Austrian troops should aid in suppressing the rebellion, but the English stood in the way of peace; and it was without regret on the part of Austria that the fate of the campaign was decided against the allies. England was left to do as she pleased, while Austria and Prussia were wrangling with Russia about indemnity in Poland. It was not the proud and vacillating king of Prussia who led his army to defeat the Polish patriots, but the veteran Russians under Suvarrov. The Prussians were retreating as rapidly as they could toward Posen.⁵⁴ Kosciuszko was taken prisoner by Suvarov and Warsaw fell. All Poland seemed paralyzed at the news of Kosciuszko's defeat and capture. Although the Poles fought obstinately to keep the Russians from gaining Praga, fate seemed to have decided that Poland should be no more.⁵⁵ Russia, by the last partition, ac-

51. Eversley, The Partition of Poland, 174.

52. *ibid.*, 204.

53. *ibid.*, 191.

54. *ibid.*, 222.

55. Fletcher, History of Poland, 342.

quired the remaining portion of Lithuania, a great part of Samogitia, part of Chelm on the right bank of the Bug, and the rest of Volhynia. Austria obtained the greater part of the palatinate of Cracow, the palatinates of Sandomir and Lublin with part of Chelm, and parts of Brzesc, Polochia, and Masovia along the left bank of the Bug. On the right of the Bug, Prussia received portions of Masovia and Polochia in Lithuania, part of the palatinates of Troki and Samogitia, and a district of Little Poland forming part of the palatinate of Cracow.⁵⁶

Thus by these three partitions, the kingdom of Poland was wiped out, but the hope of its recovery burned restlessly in the hearts of its former citizens. Wherever the exiled patriots gathered, a "Confederacy" was formed, the aim of which was to wreak vengeance on the three powers and restore Poland to her ancient rights. Such was the position when the attention was attracted to their fate of a great man who was to do much in arousing their hopes. Napoleon Bonaparte was at the head of a campaign in Italy directed against the Austrians, and had as one of his aides-de-camp, a Pole, Suckowski. The latter urged the confederates to interest Napoleon in their favor. So successful were they that he promised Oginski that as soon as the war in Italy should end, he himself would lead the French and oblige the Russians to restore Poland.⁵⁷ Bourrienne in his memoirs expresses the conviction that Bonaparte did have the avenging of the Poles deeply at heart.⁵⁸ Oginski had been sent to Constan-

56. Fletcher, History of Poland, 344.

57. ibid., 352.

58. Bourrienne, Memoirs of Napoleon Bonaparte, vol.III, 17.

tinople to negotiate in favor of the Poles, but Napoleon said that the Turks would make fine promises which would amount to nothing. The other countries, England included, discouraged the thought of independence. France, to whom liberty meant everything, was the only country which held out any encouragement. The confederacy at Paris sent emissaries into Lithuania and Galicia to form new confederacies. True to Napoleon's prediction, the Poles received no benefit from Oginski's mission to Turkey.⁵⁹ The French ambassador in Austria urged the Poles to definite action contrary to the advice of Oginski, and it is thought that he did so in order to ascertain what troops were in Galicia. It was a fatal movement for the Poles, who were obliged to break up their assembly and disperse.⁶⁰

The death of Catherine II relieved the Poles of one of their worst tyrants, and her successor, Paul, released the imprisoned Poles and allowed the exiles to return from Siberia. Prussia was planning to restore the constitutional government, with a Prussian prince on the throne.⁶¹ Austria, whose former policy had been one of defensive friendship, was now oppressing her Polish subjects, and did not ease the persecutions. Some Poles were put in prison and some were hanged, but these actions of violence did not stop others from joining the French armies which were in Italy.⁶² A plan was laid before the Directory in France to raise a Polish legion of refugees, who would serve under a French general against their common enemy, Austria, but at this

59. Fletcher, History of Poland, 353.

60. *ibid.*, 354.

61. *ibid.*, 356.

62. *ibid.*, 357.

time the French Constitution did not allow any foreign troops to be taken into its pay. The project was laid before the Cisalpine Republic which had lately been formed in Lombardy by Bonaparte, and a Polish legion was formed.⁶³ The Poles fought bravely and were even induced to invade Hungary. With their aid the treacherous oligarchy of Venice was laid low. It was with no little regret on the part of the Poles that the treaty of Campo-Formio was signed in 1797, in which not a mention of Poland was made. Napoleon always expressed the highest admiration for the Poles and said that everyone who was a friend of liberty was a friend of theirs.⁶⁴

The Polish legions were now the representatives of their nation and kept the name of Poland before Europe. They fought at Rome in 1798, and in 1799 they entered in the campaign against the Russians and the Austrians. At the fearful siege of Mantua, which was compelled to capitulate, many of the Poles were seized and forced to enter the Austrian ranks. The first legion was almost annihilated at Novi. This same year saw Napoleon's return from Egypt and his rise to the consulship, and the Poles were taken directly into the service of France.⁶⁵ A new Polish legion was employed in the army of the Rhine. After the treaty of Lunéville in 1801 their services ended for awhile, and some, becoming disgusted because no advantages were gained for the Poles, deserted. The remainder of the legion were ordered to St. Domingo to aid in putting down a negro rebellion, but nearly

63. Fletcher, History of Poland, 357.

64. *ibid.*, 360.

65. *ibid.*, 362.

all of these perished. The few that did survive fell into the hands of the English and were taken to Jamaica.⁶⁶ All hope for a re-established Poland seemed to have vanished.

66. Fletcher, History of Poland, 362.

II. The Establishment of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw

While the peace of Amiens contained no mention of the Poles, they were not altogether forgotten. In the reports of Napoleon there were extensive references to the bravery of the Polish legions which had fought under France, and in the bulletins of the army honorable mention was made of some who had distinguished themselves in the campaigns in Italy and Egypt.¹ But in spite of these mentions, the Poles felt that they were neglected and many of them began to look elsewhere. Czartoryski, who was an assistant to the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Russia,² knew that Russia and England were arranging for a meeting at which plans for a league to preserve peace in Europe were to be introduced. Those nations which had been forced unwillingly under foreign rule, meaning of course Italy, Holland, and the smaller dependencies of Napoleon, were to be restored to their ancient rights. Czartoryski submitted a plan to Alexander for the rearrangement of Europe, and one of its most important articles was that about Poland. The Emperor of Russia, taking the title of the King of Poland, was to have all the territories that had belonged to Poland before the first partition as one of his shares in the new plan.⁴ If this plan had been successful, Alexander might, after a time, have been liberal minded enough to give them their independence. It is perhaps better that it did not succeed, for it is doubtful whether the Poles could have put aside their

1. Mémoires de Michel Oginski, Vol. II, 321.

2. Czartoryski, Vol. I, 305.

3. ibid., Vol. II, 53.

4. ibid., 53.

petty jealousies long enough to work together peacefully. Their use of the later opportunities opened to them seems to prove that the kingdom could not have been maintained successfully had Czartoryski's wild ideas been fulfilled. They continually looked back to the old order of things, and I believe that legislation could not have been carried through rapidly enough to make even a temporary government sufficient to tide them over a crisis.

The plan for the third coalition was successful with the one exception that Prussia could not be drawn in with the other powers. Her price was Hanover, and as this was not guaranteed to her, she remained neutral. Russia threatened to declare Poland a kingdom, and by this event Prussia would have lost the territory she had gained in the three partitions. She remained obstinate and the allies began action without her. Alexander declared himself firm in his intent to restore Poland, as a kingdom under the sceptre of Russia, and England said that if Poland were to be restored she would give her consent.⁵ It seemed as if Czartoryski's plan with reference to Poland were to be accepted now, although it had been refused at the meeting of the powers. The Tsar was well received by the Poles and one who was particularly influential, Oginski, spoke highly of him and was deeply touched by the interest that the Tsar took in his family. He was very grateful to him for the protection of his patriots and the confidence he had in them, but more than all for the promised regeneration of Poland.⁶

At this time, Napoleon had declared himself King of Italy

5. Czartoryski, Vol. II, 98.

6. ibid., 324.

and thus not only threatened Austria but Russia as well. To reach the allied armies, Napoleon brought some of his troops across Prussian territory, thereby incurring the displeasure of this country to such an extent that she began to prepare for war. Austria now became alarmed at the intention of Russia and rushed her troops to the Galician frontier, demanding of Russia that this frontier should be maintained if the kingdom of Poland were restored.⁷ Napoleon pushed forward and defeated the allied powers on the field of Austerlitz.⁸ The Russian Emperor and the Emperor of Austria were obliged to flee for safety. Czartoryski felt that the fate of Poland rested on this day; he remarked several years later, when Alexander was planning for a reconstruction of the kingdom, that the most suitable time for doing anything for Poland was past, referring to the time before the battle of Austerlitz.⁹ By this victory Russia, Prussia, and Austria were obliged to recognize the demands of Napoleon, and his forced passage through Prussia had proved to him that Poland had not ceased to exist in spirit even though it no longer existed as a political state.¹⁰

The prospects which had seemed so dark for the Poles after the peace of Amiens were fanned into flame again by Napoleon. Secret agents and emissaries were sent into the Russian-Polish provinces, and decrees were published under the name of Oginski.¹¹ In November, 1806, Napoleon also sent overtures to the Polish nation, announcing to the patriots that Kosciuszko had come to the

7. Czartoryski, Vol. II, 98.

8. *ibid.*, 107.

9. *ibid.*, 201.

10. *ibid.*, 100.

11. Mémoires de Oginski, Vol. II, 335.

front to join with the French for the establishment of Poland. These proclamations aroused all of the enthusiasm of the Poles and heightened their hopes through the dark days that came. The desired effect was obtained, for Napoleon knew that these brave people would be very useful to him in the war against Prussia and Russia.¹² November 19, 1806, the Emperor of France received the deputies of the palatinate of Posen. He told them that France had never recognized the partitions of the unfortunate Poland, and since the events of war had thrown him into their country, it conformed with his principles to receive the representations of that royal kingdom. As Emperor of the French, he would see with a keen interest the throne of Poland re-established and the independence of that grand nation assured. He informed them, however, that more depended on them than on France, but the political principles which led France not to recognize the partitions of Poland made him desirous of seeing Poland restored, and they were assured of his powerful protection.¹³

We will agree, I think, that the Poles should help themselves, but we cannot blame them for being thrilled at the thought of such powerful help, and rallying to the French side. Their acquaintanceship with Napoleon was yet young and there had been no extraordinary and brilliant promises broken to shake the faith of the Polish people. A few such as Czartoryski, Oginski, and Kosciuszko placed little faith in his promises and did not follow with their country. Oginski, at his home near Vilna, knew

12. Mémoires de Michel Oginski, Vol. II, 336.

13. Correspondence de Napoléon, I^{er}, Vol. XIII, 551.

that Napoleon, well knowing Kosciuszko's influence over the Poles was making urgent overtures to him to induce him to join the army. Oginski could not believe that it was Napoleon's intention to re-establish Poland and above all to make it free and independent; neither could he enter into a project which he felt would not be successful, nor share in the hopes of the elated Poles. He affirms that he saw in the Emperor of France a conqueror with a devouring ambition, and a despot; one who was repugnant to his principles and who repelled all hope of confidence.¹⁴ Napoleon was not a little chagrined by the refusals of Kosciuszko.

The inhabitants of Prussian Poland were electrified at the news of Napoleon's approach, and volunteers flocked to the victorious banners of the French, who entered Warsaw in triumph. The exultation of the Poles knew no bounds when Napoleon established his general headquarters at Posen.¹⁵ Murat, in writing to Napoleon, said that the people were very much disposed to aid and were highly elated at the approach of his troops.¹⁶ Rich and poor, strong and weak, talked of nothing but the past glories of their nation, and of the fact that at last an avenger had come to aid them in the restoration of their brilliant kingdom. Everywhere, the national hymns were sung and people took part in the parades and the fêtes that recalled the glorious traditions of the past.¹⁷ The Polish ladies were charming beyond words and they have been regarded as much more dangerous than the men. It is they who urged the men onward and kept alive their national

14. Mémoires de Michel Oginski, Vol. II, 336.

15. ibid., 338.

16. Murat, Letters and Documents, Vol. IV, 460.

17. Sorel, A., L'Europe et la Révolution Française, Pt. VII, 124.

traditions.¹⁸ Napoleon himself in telling of his reception said there was a great national movement and everyone rich or poor was in arms. "The first passion and the first desire of every Pole is to re-establish their nation; already they have taken up their ancient customs and habits," he wrote.¹⁹ A Te Deum was sung December 2, 1806, in honor of the anniversary of the coronation of the emperor, and balls were held.

In the Chamber of Warsaw, Poles replaced German officials. Napoleon set about to organize a legion of Poles who had deserted from Prussia and Russia, but he was very careful not to encourage further desertion and he warned his colonels in their proclamations not to mention the name of Poland.²⁰ In his own proclamation to the soldiers he said, "It is in vain that the Russians have defended the capital of that ancient and illustrious Poland. The eagle of the French floats on the Vistula. The brave and unfortunate Poles believe that they see again the legions of Sobieski after the return of that memorable expedition."²¹ He excited them by recalling their past disasters, the victories of Catherine, the Massacre of Praga, and the devastation of their castles by the Cossacks. The Poles asked him to make a march of their country and attach it to his empire ^{like} / Holland or Dalmatia. He, however, intended to use them abroad. He told them that he was surprised at the amount of patriotism that still burned within them so long after they had been conquered.²² He then ordered the

18. Brandes, G., Impressions on Poland, 53.

19. Correspondence de Napoléon I^{er}, Vol. XIV, 10.

20. ibid., Vol. XIII, 247.

21. Sorel, L'Europe et la Révolution Française, Pt. VII, 125.

22. Correspondence de Napoléon I^{er}, Vol. XIII, 530.

legions of Poland to be commanded by officers of the Polish nobility.²³ Just as with his own soldiers, Napoleon knew how to touch the hearts of the Polish soldiers by referring to past victories in which perchance some one of them might have had a part. Napoleon was a good actor and so far in the career of his destiny he had not failed to carry his soldier audiences with him. Those patriots who looked with doubt on the enthusiasm created by Napoleon hoped that the Tsar would not allow so powerful a man to come near his frontier. Czartoryski, who was near Alexander and was always on the watch for some advantage to be gained for Poland, urged the Tsar to proclaim Poland as a separate state;²⁴ but to all of these repeated supplications Alexander had replied that the time to do away with the iniquities of Poland was the time when other abuses were abolished in Europe. Then all wrongs could be righted, and the privileges that he, Czartoryski, sought for Poland could be granted.²⁵ As before when urged to act quickly, Alexander hesitated too long, and Napoleon, by his flattery and promises, won the confidence of the Poles. No one knew what he meant to do for Poland and one can only make assumptions as to what he might have done for the nation; but judging from his motives as ordinarily interpreted, the evidence is very much in favor of the belief that he was using them for his own convenience.

As a result of the numerous proclamations of Napoleon, the Poles were fired with a hope of recovering their independence. But Napoleon demanded that if he was to restore their nation, he

23. Correspondence de Napoléon I^{er}, Vol. XIII, 530.

24. Czartoryski, Vol. II, 170.

25. Sorel, L'Europe et la Révolution Française, Pt. VII, 128.

must have evidence that they could maintain it. Troops were levied to serve in the war in addition to those who had volunteered. In speaking of the deputation that came to Napoleon, Talleyrand said that it was numerous and was made up of some of the most illustrious men of Poland. They made addresses to the emperor and offered him all of the forces of the country. Napoleon seized upon this offer, and explaining himself little as to the rest of their demands, he replied that when they had an army of forty thousand men they would be worthy to be called a nation and have a right to his protection.²⁶ Napoleon could have used the volunteers very well, and here was an offer which would fill his own thinning ranks; Talleyrand remarks that Napoleon reorganized Poland in such a manner that she became very useful to him at the opening of the campaign.²⁷

The Russian army that had occupied Warsaw evacuated it as the French approached. Later, at St. Helena, Napoleon said that the Poles were called upon to leave the Russian service and fight with the French for liberty and independence.²⁸ Side by side with the French the Poles fought bravely at the battle of Eylau, a victory accorded to Napoleon only by the silent retreat of the Russians during the night. Napoleon did not return to his headquarters in Poland but drew his troops into cantonments across East Prussia. He wished to make a separate treaty of peace with Frederick William and to restore to Prussia all of the land east of the Elbe. He attached no importance whatever to the Poles,

26. Broglie, Duc de., Memoirs of Talleyrand, Vol. I, 233.

27. ibid., 235.

28. Correspondence de Napoléon I^{er}, Vol. XXIV, 70.

now that he knew them better.²⁸ This was just what Oginski thought would be the outcome of Napoleon's promises to restore Poland. But it cannot be said that he promised to restore Poland outright for he was too tactful to bind himself by broad statements. He said, "Shall the throne of Poland be re-established and that great nation take again its existence and its independence?"²⁹ This was in 1806 before the campaign in Poland. In asking such a question he did not commit himself to any promises or agreements. Little by little the other patriots woke up to a number of facts: that Kosciuszko had resisted Napoleon's propositions; that his signature had not been attached to the proclamations issued in his name; that Napoleon had never entertained the idea of re-establishing Poland on a basis as powerful and independent as she had formerly been, because it would have been out of harmony with his preceding system, of making a conquered territory a dependency of France; and, finally, that the Tsar Alexander and the Emperor Napoleon were negotiating a peace in which the latter was to sacrifice the interests of Poland for his own.³⁰ In all of his plans in the year 1807, Poland was not the most prominent, as he tried to make it appear; indeed, one can almost say it was a part only in so far as he needed the aid of the Polish people. Their reward did not obstruct his pathway toward betterment for himself. Having used them, and a more profitable plan appearing before him, he was now prepared to cast them aside as readily as he had taken them up.

28. Correspondence de Napoléon Ier, vol. XXIV, 70.

29. Cambridge Modern History, vol. IX, 287.

30. Mémoires de Michel Oginski, vol. II, 343.

Czartoryski had again repeatedly urged the Tsar to make overtures to the Poles in spite of the fact that the balance was on the side of Napoleon. For Russia to re-establish the Polish nation would swing the pendulum in her favor and the situation would be reversed. Czartoryski put forth this argument. "Instead of Russia's being exposed to Bonaparte's seductions, she would be able to raise her inhabitants against him; and by re-establishing Poland an outpost would be created behind which she could remain intact with all her forces at her command. The cause of anxiety as to the conduct of the Poles and every motive for speculating on such conduct on the part of her enemies would be forever removed."³¹ Bonaparte would have had greater difficulties in invading Russia; and if Russia should make use of the policy of retreating until victory was assured, then Napoleon would be far from his supplies and so harassed by hostile Poles in his rear that his defeat under such circumstances would have meant nothing short of an absolute surrender.

To declare Poland a separate kingdom would not have meant the separation from the Empire of one of its integral parts; but the crown of Poland would have been irrevocably attached to the throne of Russia and, at the same time, the Empire would have joined the remainder of Poland. It might have been necessary to give them a government in conformity with their wishes and their ancient laws, but while he was doing this, the bond between the Empire and the Polish nation would have been strengthened and rendered more indissoluble.³² As things now stood, Poland

31. Czartoryski, Vol. II, 167.
 32. *ibid.*, 168.

was a source of continual anxiety and suspicion for the Russians, and for the French, a source of safety. But as before, Alexander hesitated to act, and Napoleon won the support of the Poles, who fought with him in the campaigns of 1807. After the fatal battle of Friedland on June 14, 1807, the Russian Emperor consented to an armistice with Napoleon which was to develop into a peace decidedly contrary to the ideals of the Poles.

All Europe resounded with the victory of Napoleon, and everyone was anxiously awaiting the outcome of the interview that was to take place in the middle of the Niemen. A Polish patriot, Count Linawski, said, "My heart smote me at the thought of that interview. It is the moment when the fate of Poland, the true friend of France, is going to be decided. Nowhere else in Europe is France and the Emperor going to see a people better disposed and more fitted to be a loyal ally and brother in arms than the Polish nation. The Russians detest you (the French); the Germans do not love you, and the fanatical Spaniards rebel among themselves. The Poles alone remain and will remain by inclination and by tolerance."³³ With vague and flattering words Napoleon won his way into the heart of Alexander, who allowed his ally, Prussia, to be torn to pieces and bowed to the ground. Prussia lost all of her territory west of the Elbe; the Polish provinces which were annexed in 1793; the southern part of west Prussia acquired in 1772; Kattbus which was assigned to Saxony; and Dantzig, which with a radius of ten miles was created a free city.³⁴ Dantzig was one of the important cities of Poland

33. Correspondence du Davout, Vol. II, 289.

34. Cambridge Modern History, Vol. IV., 292.

and very necessary to her commerce, but as a free city she was now lost. It seems to me that Napoleon could scarcely have dealt a blow more crushing than this of depriving the Poles of Dantzic, for it was because of this city and Thorn that the Poles had hesitated to come to terms with the Prussians in 1792. The reward of the Poles was not the restoration of their grand and illustrious kingdom which Napoleon had led them to believe it would be, but the creation of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw out of the Prusso--Polish provinces. Nor was this made official until 1808. Even though disappointed in not realizing their ambition, the Poles were very enthusiastic about the Grand Duchy, for it seemed but a step further to the restored kingdom. Oginski, who was not in the immediate vicinity, presents another point of view which Sorel shares. At the meeting in Tilsit, the two negotiators agreed to speak as little as possible of Poland, but it must have been at Napoleon's suggestion, for I believe that Alexander was disposed to do all he could for the Poles. It was disheartening to the Poles to have the one in whom they had placed their confidence and trust, and who promised to have their interests foremost in his mind when a peace should be made, take the initiative against them. In the final agreement between Russia and France a new obstacle was created between them: Poland was transformed into a frontier of the Grand Empire.³⁵ When Oginski was questioned as to the prospects of Poland, he expressed himself as against all trust and confidence in Napoleon. Had the Emperor of France entered and occupied Volhynia and Lithuania

35. Sorel, L'Europe et la Révolution Française, Pt. VIII, 186.

he would not have united them with the Grand Duchy of Warsaw but would have made separate duchies of them. Out of the Polish provinces taken from Prussia he would make a duchy of Mazobia or of Warsaw but never the duchy or kingdom of Poland.³⁶ When Napoleon was a general in Italy, Oginski had had great faith in him and had even urged the Poles to interest him in their affairs. Moreover, he himself addressed a letter to the "Citizen General" in which he invoked his immediate aid in restoring the overpowered nation to liberty and independence.³⁷ His attitude later, in 1807, shows that his convictions had changed, and he often regretted the hasty letter he had written. The displeasure of many of his best friends was incurred because he was strong in the belief that Napoleon did not mean to re-establish Poland.³⁸ Had Napoleon entered Lithuania it was very likely that the inhabitants would have received him with open arms. While they were in that attitude a courier brought to Vilna the news of the Treaty of Tilsit; the general opinion which resulted from the news was that Napoleon was satisfied at having been recognized by Alexander, who was the only leader he feared on the continent. Poland was not considered in the treaty, and far from being reunited, a portion of it was ceded to Alexander and Napoleon would have ceded to him the portion of which he created the Grand Duchy but Alexander refused.³⁹ This treaty of Tilsit was regarded as the grave of all the hopes that had been conceived of seeing Poland re-established, and from that period the confidence in Napoleon

36. Mémoires de Michel Oginski, vol. II, 343.

37. Bourrienne, Memoirs of Napoleon Bonaparte, vol. III, 237.

38. Mémoires de Michel Oginski, vol. II, 343.

39. Bourrienne, Memoirs of Napoleon, vol. III, 240.

was weakened in the provinces belonging to Russia.⁴⁰ The formation of the Duchy of Warsaw corresponded imperfectly to the ideas entertained by the Poles who had recently been under the sceptre of Prussia. But in giving the Duchy of Warsaw to the King of Saxony Napoleon pleased the Poles, for he was the prince who had been called to the throne of Poland by the constitution of May 3, 1791 when the election of kings was abolished.⁴¹ The Poles were again allowed to have a short period of rising spirits, and here again they believed that another step had been taken which was to reunite Poland. But the Grand Duchy was just another link in Napoleon's chain of dependencies by which he was gradually enlarging his sphere of influence in Europe and which was to lead him on to greater influence and finally a world empire.

Napoleon was under two fires, as it were, between Alexander and the Poles. He must work for the advantage of both, but ultimately for neither. He had appeased the Poles with their Grand Duchy and Saxon king, and the next to be considered was Alexander, who was assured that there were not the slightest intentions of restoring Poland. At one time Napoleon had hinted that he created the Grand Duchy of Warsaw as the basis of a project for the restoration of Poland;⁴² this was for Polish ears. Later he announced that he had promised the Emperor Alexander not to augment the Duchy of Warsaw and to do nothing further toward restoring Poland.⁴³ Lenz thinks that Alexander was disappointed with the arrangements

40. Mémoires de Michel Oginski, Vol. II, 345.

41. ibid., 346.

42. Jomini, Life of Napoleon I, Vol. II, 318.

43. ibid., 322.

of Poland and in the hopes which had drawn him into the war, for the Tsar had hoped to have the whole of Galicia.⁴⁴ He must have seen by this time that Napoleon was a friend as long as things were going his way; indeed, Napoleon's attitude toward the Poles when he wished to make peace with Prussia illustrates this policy. Davout says that Alexander did not favor the creation of the Grand Duchy, but that he was so flattered by the concessions made to him after his defeat that he did not remonstrate against the actions of Napoleon.⁴⁴ Bourrienne is of the opinion that Napoleon guaranteed to Alexander the shares of Poland already possessed by him and even offered to enlarge it by the addition of Warsaw and the whole of Prussian Poland. It was not until after this generous offer had been declined by Alexander that he formed the Duchy of Warsaw and gave it to the king of Saxony.⁴⁵

We must ask ourselves why Napoleon was so generous in giving away that which was really not his to give. Whither was his star of destiny leading him? Before any more criticism of his methods are offered it must be plainly impressed on our minds that Napoleon had committed atrocities no worse than those committed by Russia, Austria, and Prussia. The thing which makes it seem so startling is that he worked by leaps and bounds. A magic wand was waved and all was changed. The idea had to grow on the other nations and the poor victim, Poland, was vivisected slowly until all life as a political existence had ebbed away. But the fact that the other nations were guilty of crimes, if we wish to call them such, does not in the least excuse Napoleon. He had been

44. Correspondence du Davout, vol. II, 2.

45. Bourrienne, Memoirs of Napoleon, vol. III, 240.

offered the Polish forces it is true, but I think that he advanced north in order to excite them. He secured their aid and left it to fate to decide what should be done for them at the close of the campaign. He accomplished his purpose in gaining the alliance of Russia and now to keep Alexander's friendship he overloaded Alexander with attention. I believe that had the campaign failed against Russia, Napoleon would have recreated the fallen kingdom, but only in order that he might succeed in crushing Alexander. His star of destiny, however, guided him to his goal and he now had to dazzle the great man of the north. It is not surprising that Alexander should have opposed the Grand Duchy, for it would inevitably become the nucleus of a new Poland, and to accept it would bring the two great empires too closely together.

Napoleon was not as generous as it may seem in offering this large amount of territory to Alexander. For Napoleon to be bound by territory in the north, would keep his attention from the Orient and his idea of a world empire. In giving the Polish territory to Alexander, the problem of solving the Polish question would have devolved upon him, and at the same time he would have owed allegiance to France. Bourrienne remarks that insurmountable obstacles existed in the way of the restoration, and it is likely that some of the obstacles were those mentioned. He thinks however, that it was unfortunate for France and Europe that it was not re-established and of course 'what might have been' is always a thing of regret. Napoleon planted the Grand Duchy of Warsaw on the banks of the Vistula in order to avoid touching the

Russian and Austrian provinces of old Poland, with the intention of increasing or destroying it as he saw fit. The Poles were led to hope for better things and he ensured to himself partisans in the north should the chances of fortune call him thither.⁴⁶

46. Bourrienne, Memoirs of Napoleon Bonaparte, vol. III, 21.

III. The Grand Duchy of Warsaw from 1807 to 1812

Whether the assumption as to the motives of Napoleon in creating the Grand Duchy of Warsaw are true or not, now that it was under his watchful eye, he set about making changes in the old order of things and instituting the ideals of freedom and liberty. A committee named by Bonaparte drew up a constitutional statute which was signed by him at Dresden on July 22, 1807. The main articles were that the religion of the state was to be Roman Catholic, but liberty of worship was guaranteed to all, and all were recognized as equal in the eyes of the law; the slavery of the peasants was abolished; the dietines, combined after a new process with departmental assemblies, elected a Diet which was divided into two chambers. The Duke possessed the initiative in the laws, the nomination of senators, of the presidents of the dietines, and even the presidents of the departmental assemblies. His ministers formed a council of state; they could dissolve the Diets; ^{and} appoint the judiciary order, the judges exercised their functions for life.¹ The Duchy was divided into six departments: Posen, Kalisch, Plock, Warsaw, Lomza and Bydgoszez. The Poles had the satisfaction of being under the government of a prince who merited their affection and esteem; of seeing their brave Prince Poniatonski at the head of the department of war, and respectable citizens occupying the first posts of the state. But to counteract all the improvements and privileges given to them, they had to support the numerous French troops on their

1. Oginski, Memoires, vol. II, 347.

territory and to contribute to the expenses of the civil list which was excessively disproportionate to the population. Here as in Italy, Spain, and Holland, Napoleon left in his trail heavy taxes. The King of Saxony, who would gladly have lightened their obligations, could not resist the vexations of the military government of Napoleon. Many landowners had to sell their estates or else give them up to the administration of the public treasure.² Napoleon's private secretary, Meneval, lays the blame of the unfortunate treatment of the Poles on Pradt, his ambassador at Warsaw. Pradt would revise all reports that came from, or proceeded to, the emperor. When the Emperor learned of this state of affairs the ambassador was severely reprimanded.³ But the world did not know that his orders were being disobeyed and so attached the blame to Napoleon. No doubt the latter exerted a powerful influence over Meneval, so that his reports are somewhat biased. The King of Saxony was very much devoted to Napoleon and the Poles hoped that conditions would change and that Poland would be reunited. They anxiously awaited the departure of the French army before putting the new constitution into effect.⁴ If the changes made in this constitution could have been carried out effectively, there is no reason to think otherwise that the country would have prospered. But serfdom was only abolished in theory and the freedmen remained virtually in their old position. Military affairs alone received much attention and some Polish

2. Oginski, Vol. II, 347.

3. De Ménéval, Baron, Memoirs to Serve for the History of Napoléon I, Vol. III, 33.

4. Davout, Correspondence, vol. II, 88.

regiments were equipped. The Emperor took over into his pay some of the troops of Poland but even that did little to relieve the constant drain which was made upon the country.⁵ Napoleon was content to make an appearance of reconstruction and to attach^{to}/himself, by an extension of power, the Duke of Poland.⁶ He even flattered himself that affairs were settling down by saying that the most perfect harmony reigned between the army and the people of the Duchy of Warsaw.⁷

Within the Duchy party faction was again astir. One party was made up of nobles and their retainers who had lost their lands when the peasants were freed, in order that the latter might become proprietors; they were neither the friends of the Emperor nor the partisans of France. Russia alone had conciliated their goodwill by hardening serfdom, and a constitutional oligarchy was the dream of that small number of patrician families. The aid of France was agreeable to them as far as there was any sacrifice promised, and there was an indulgence of hope to them for their deliverance from the presence of enemies when the conquest was achieved.⁸ This is no more than Napoleon did when he offered to sacrifice the interests of the Poles before the treaty of Tilsit. The other party of which Davout speaks was composed of nobles who were clearly for the true interests of their country, and having no fear of France, they hoped for its support. The Poles, or at least some of the leading families, had begun to suspect France,

5. Cambridge Modern History, vol. IX, 339.

6. Davout, Correspondence, Vol. II, 4.

7. ibid., 45.

8. Correspondence du Davout, vol. II, 80.

and it was feared that should war break out, Poland would not side with France. It was unfortunate, so Davout says, that the King of Saxony had so much right of intervention in the affairs of the government and that Poniatowski succeeded in getting so many of his own party into power. The government was changing from a national to a military character.⁹ It was true that some of the Poles distrusted Napoleon and even those outside the Grand Duchy did not flock to his new creation. One who particularly held aloof and who once had the opportunity of informing Napoleon, that he would rather live under Russia than in the Grand Duchy, was Oginski. He informed Napoleon that Alexander endeavored to please the Poles, to soften their misfortunes, and gain their affections.¹⁰ Alexander promised the Poles of Russia a government entirely Polish and a constitution like that of May 3, and those who had served in the Polish army and would now enter the service of Russia, he promoted to high positions.¹¹ In Lithuania, however, the creation of the Grand Duchy was almost a promise to restore Poland, and all over the province everything which bore the name of France was received by them with an eagerness which went almost to imprudence. The governors of the interior feared that a rebellion might break out in the army and in such a case the welfare of Alexander was threatened.¹² While Alexander was thus endeavoring to conciliate his new subjects and those which had come under

9. Correspondence du Davout, Vol. II, 84.

10. Oginski, Memoirs, Vol. II, 351.

11. Correspondence du Davout, Vol. II, 35.

12. ibid., 44.

his sceptre by the partitions of Poland, Napoleon indirectly attracted them to himself. His great victories and his own attractiveness won him many followers.

When the Prussians heard of the great army which was being formed in Poland, they began to be suspicious, and Polish officers discharged from the service of Prussia informed Davout that the Prussians hoped for war.¹³ They were agitating the reunion of the Duchy of Warsaw to Prussia and the cession of Galicia at the same time.¹⁴ To do this would involve them in a war against Austria and France, but they were hoping for the help of the Poles and there was a strong Polish party in Prussia. In 1808 a rebellion broke out in Spain and Napoleon employed thousands of Poles to aid in restoring quiet to that peninsula. A great many of the patriots were won over to France, and Napoleon's half promises of a new Poland led many to volunteer in order that Napoleon might come to their aid.

Czartoryski had resigned from the Imperial Council at St. Petersburg shortly after the treaty of Tilsit, on account of the creation of the Duchy and the immediate help that seemed about to be given the Poles; but as the French army continued to occupy Poland he began to turn his attention again to Russia. It was Napoleon's policy to bow Prussia as low as he could and indeed it seems that he was about to finish the annihilation of Prussia and erase Austria from Europe. Napoleon would not have

13. Correspondence du Davout, Vol. II, 44.

14. ibid., 145.

stopped with conquering Prussia and Austria but would have invaded Russia, claiming the Polish provinces and reestablishing Poland.¹⁶ Alexander became alarmed and his counsellors began to agitate the question of Poland again.¹⁵ The uneasiness of the Tsar was noticed by the French Emperor who arranged for an interview with his ally at Erfurt. He assured the Tsar that his attitude toward Poland was the same as he had held at Tilsit and that he would do nothing to add to the Grand Duchy, or proclaim the restoration of the kingdom of Poland.¹⁷ Napoleon informed the world that the primary object of this second interview with the Tsar was to ensure peace and that both of them had resolved to make sacrifices to that affect.¹⁸ This announcement could hardly have pleased the Poles, for only by a war could they hope to be reunited. Davout says that ever since Alexander passed through the Grand Duchy on his way to Erfurt, the Prussians had tried to make the inhabitants uneasy. Even Czartoryski seemed to be turning again to his Majesty Napoleon, for in a talk given before the senate of the Duchy his ideas were such as to lead one to think that the only hope of restoration lay with France.¹⁹ In this I cannot help thinking that Davout was mistaken, for while the prince did resign from the Imperial Council of Russia, he always kept in touch with Alexander and was always bringing up some plan for peace in which he urged Alexander to declare himself King of Poland. If he did lean toward France it was only

15. Sorel, L'Europe et la Révolution Française, Pt. VII, 306.

16. ibid., 307.

17. ibid., 314.

18. Correspondence de Napoléon I^{er}, Vol. XVIII, 21.

for a short time, for in 1809 we again find him taunting the Tsar for having allowed such arrangements at Erfurt.²⁰

Napoleon's overbearing policy was sure to produce a break somewhere; and it came a year later, in 1809, with Austria, who tried to form a coalition against France in order to set the enslaved countries free. She found herself single-handed in the war and even one of the countries on which she had counted, Russia, acted in alliance with France. Near Austria was the Grand Duchy whose inhabitants might provoke to insurrection the Austro-Polish provinces. The campaign in the north took place in Poland, and the Austrian general endeavored to capture Warsaw, which was occupied after a fierce struggle, but Praga, its suburb, remained in the hands of the Poles.²¹ The attention of the enemy was diverted to Galicia, and when their forces were strengthened in that province, the city of Warsaw was relieved. The Austrians tried to gain several other points of advantage in Poland but were obliged to fall back. An armistice brought hostilities to a close and the decision of the war lay with the main army in Poland. Poland was poorly defended because most of the Polish troops were in Spain or in garrisons in Prussian fortresses. It was their brave prince Poniatowski who, having been obliged to surrender Warsaw, now won it back from the Austrians.²² From the beginning of the Polish campaign, communications with Russia became more frequent, but after the occupation of Vienna by the French they

19. Correspondence du Davout, vol. II, 296.

20. ibid., 143.

21. Cambridge Modern History, Vol. IX, 354.

22. Mémoires de Michel Oginski, vol. II, 358.

almost ceased.

Poland was reduced more than ever to poverty by the ravages of the war, for not only had the French army continued to live off her country but she had to support the Polish army as well, the expenses of which should have been borne by France. By the treaty of Schönbrunn or of Vienna in 1809 the western part of Galicia was added to the Duchy of Warsaw, a provision which was contrary to the treaty of Tilsit.²³ Jomini makes Napoleon say, "In reality the Russians were individually dissatisfied with the treaty of Tilsit and especially with that article which created the Duchy of Warsaw, for they dreaded the restoration of Poland as much as the loss of their own empire; they were ignorant of the secret article which forbade its re-establishment. I must confess that in this matter I exhibited more independence and boldness than redress and foresight. I desired the restoration of Poland and I was not likely to exhibit on this occasion anything like pusillanimous regards for the opinion of Russia."²⁴ Neither the Russians nor the Poles knew whether to trust Napoleon or not, but as before Napoleon's cajolery won their confidence and they flocked to his army to enlist in the name of liberty. Since Galicia and the mines of Wieliczka were added to the Duchy prospects seemed bright for the kingdom yet to the Polish deputation who came to him Bonaparte said, "Poland is a question on which all negotiations with Russia fail. Russia sees quite well

23. Mémoires de Michel Oginski, Vol. II, 358.

24. Jomini, Life of Napoleon I^{er}, Vol. III, 137.

that she is vulnerable only through Poland. If I were Emperor of Russia I would never consent to the least increase in the Duchy of Warsaw. I know that the re-establishment of Poland would balance all Europe but you see Russia would never consent unless her armies were all totally destroyed. The re-establishment of Poland is not at this moment within the power of France. I will not make war on Russia."²⁵ But Napoleon would not have hesitated to declare war on Russia had it been to his advantage, and as we shall learn later he did have a war with that nation and he remarked that hostility was as good as its alliance for the Continental System.²⁶

Alexander had felt that Napoleon was being deceptive, and when the Grand Duchy of Warsaw was enlarged he was not a little irritated. Napoleon intended to manage Alexander, the Orient, and Poland so that Alexander could cast himself on the Turks or on the Poles. Later Alexander expressed the hope that the words Poland and Pole would disappear in all political transactions and even from history.²⁷ At this news the Russians feared an uprising in Lithuania, where the Polish language was spoken; where a Polish army was organized; and where national institutions were numerous; but the Tsar meant that he hoped that these names would disappear from French history. For himself he wished to absorb Poland in Russia or unite it as a state attached to Russia.

25. Johnston, The Corsican, 318.

26. Cambridge Modern History, Vol. IX, 486.

27. Sorel, L'Europe et la Révolution Française, Pt. VII, 401.

When Prince Czartoryski heard of Alexander's words he accused him of becoming the chief enemy of the Polish nation and name. He excused himself by saying that every Russian emperor would have done the same; the prince reminded him that Poland could have been restored without being injurious to Russia. On the contrary it would have been a great advantage. The Tsar said he was not sure of any return on the part of the Poles, but Czartoryski hastened to inform him that he had done nothing to merit return; he had on the contrary alienated them. The only thing possible to do now was to grant a separate organization to those under his rule, and Napoleon would not have consented to that, for it was his sole idea to influence the Poles and use them as tools.²⁸ Alexander assured the prince that if he went to war with France he would declare himself King of Poland in order to gain the Poles to his side, but he was dryly informed that it would be too late. The Duchy of Warsaw which had been augmented by the Austrian war strengthened and maintained the patriotic sentiment of the Poles. It was a sort of phantom of ancient Poland which produced an infallible effect on all who regarded that country as their real fatherland.²⁹ Late in 1809, the Tsar brought forth a plan for a reconstruction of Poland, which was to form a kingdom of Poland out of the Duchy and Galicia, and to allow the inhabitants of the Polish provinces of Russia to serve in the new kingdom as if it were their own country.³⁰ This

28. Czartoryski, Vol. II, 193.

29. ibid., 197.

30. Czartoryski, vol. II, 203.

plan surprised the prince very much but he was doubtful as to its success.

Napoleon was not overly anxious for a break and he tried to cement the feeling more strongly by proposing a marriage between himself and the sister of Alexander. The Tsar tried to take advantage of this moment of intimacy to obtain Napoleon's signature to a treaty to the effect that the kingdom of Poland would never be re-established.³¹ But Napoleon on getting the refusal though not formally, of the Tsar for the hand of the Grand Duchess Anne, refused to sign the treaty, because, as he said, if some day the Lithuanians or some other circumstance would bring up the re-establishment of Poland he would be obliged to oppose it by armed forces.³² Thus Napoleon by his tact and cunning blocked one plan of Alexander for a time. In the summer of 1810 Oginski carried a complaint of the abuses of the inhabitants of Lithuania to Alexander, who listened very respectfully to them. An article had recently appeared in a Paris paper about the machinations of the father of Prince Adam Czartoryski. The Tsar seemed very much agitated and expressed to Oginski his fear that the Poles were being alienated by the flattery of Napoleon. He also believed that they hated the Russians. He said that he had not taken part in the partitions of Poland and he always had condemned it. As for the Russians, those who were living today were most of them not coupled with the misfortunes of Poland.

31. Sorel, L'Europe et la Révolution Française, Pt. VII, 429.

32. *ibid.*, 432.

Oginski took advantage of his outburst and told him how he himself felt toward Napoleon. He said, "Napoleon needs to attach the Poles to him and to flatter them by fine promises; as for me, I have always esteemed your nation and I hope to prove it to you some day."³³ Alexander promised a redress of grievances. The harsh measures in Lithuania ceased and great enthusiasm was expressed by the Poles for the Tsar, particularly in Vilna. It would be very difficult now for Bonaparte to obtain help from Lithuania should he wish to declare Poland a kingdom.

Napoleon on the other hand was striving very hard to keep the friendship of the Poles, and he always made a show of his interest in the inhabitants of the Grand Duchy, especially when Oginski, who was now a representative of Russia, was near. A rupture with Russia was inevitable, and Napoleon tried to make the Poles believe that a re-establishment of their kingdom would follow as one of the results of the war. He praised their bravery and attached them to his person. He enlarged their numbers in the old legions and created others composed of those who distinguished themselves in the campaign of 1809. Besides this he organized a corps of Polish lancers which became a part of his guard and for which he showed great affection.³⁴ The Duchy was taxed beyond endurance and it is only justifiable to think that Napoleon would have lightened their burdens, but it became evident that Napoleon was more interested in destroying English commerce than in re-

33. Mémoires de Michel Oginski, Vol. II, 371.

34. ibid., 377.

storing Poland. An incident happened which might have proved fatal to France as far as Polish allegiance was concerned had not Napoleon intervened and smoothed the matter over quickly. The minister of the interior in giving an account of the actual state of France in a public speech which appeared in all of the papers announced that it had never been the intention of the Emperor Napoleon to re-establish Poland. This alarmed the Poles in general; but it was of short duration, because Napoleon caused Marshall Duroc to inform the members of the government at Warsaw that it was a joke on the ambassador of Russia.³⁵ Oginski wished that the plan of re-establishing Poland might be consummated, but he never believed in the possibility of the project: first, because of the topography of Russia and her vast resources; and second, because he did not think that Napoleon would ever voluntarily proclaim its restoration, but was merely using it as a motive to attract the Poles to his side.

Marshal Duroc voiced his opinion on the re-establishment of Poland by saying that the plan for making it independent was chimerical, for it was a dream never to be realized. Poland had long been ruled by anarchy and had been lost through the jealousy of her nobles and their disunited opinions.³⁶ Oginski was very much wrought up by this news and began a careful study of the situation in Poland. He tried to interest Alexander still more in the welfare of the country and urged him to declare himself King of Poland. He advanced the arguments that Napoleon with all

35. Mémoires de Michel Oginski, Vol. II, 379

his united forces would not be able to resist the power of Russia, for his ambition would lead him beyond the Dnieper and in that case his campaign would be lost.³⁷ If Napoleon did enter ancient Poland it was certain that he would not assure to it a constitutional and representative government. To carry on a conquest of Poland and a second campaign the following year would mean more burdens on the already overtaxed people. If war should be made on Russia, and Alexander should reunite the Polish provinces to the Grand Duchy, he would find it to his advantage to give the Poles a constitutional government first of all. He seemed to be sincere in his wishes to help the Poles, and I think that he recognized the deceits that were being practiced by Napoleon. It can be said of Alexander that he did not electrify the Poles by any rash promises which he failed to carry out. He often talked of restoring Poland, but as far as can be judged, he did not set himself upon a pedestal as their deliverer and restorer. Aside from the times when he was under the influence of Napoleon he had their grievances sincerely at heart and in so far as he could he tried to alleviate them. Dealing with such an involved epoch of the world's history, it is difficult to assign any particular motive for any action; but Napoleon's acts were numerous enough for one to make a fairly good estimate of his motives, which seem to have been concerned chiefly with himself and for his own advantage.

36. Memoires de Michel Oginski, vol. II, 383.

37. ibid., 386.

It was with all sincerity and due respect to the Poles that again in 1811 Alexander took up the question of Poland. He endeavored to learn the sentiments of the Poles, particularly those of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, and whether they would accept an offer. He expressed himself as believing that if a war should occur between France and Russia, it would be a war to the death. "The support on which the Poles can rely is limited to the person of Napoleon. Should he disappear from the scene the consequences to Poland would be disastrous."³⁸ Czartoryski in his reply says that there was a unanimity of intentions and objects both in the army and among the inhabitants of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw. They wished for the reunion of all Poland into a single national body under a national and constitutional regime.³⁹ He knew, too, that the Poles would accept an offer from anyone, if it inspired more confidence and greater guarantees of success than they possessed through their union with France. The Poles were ready to fight with Napoleon, yet they did not trust him. The French Emperor led them to think that it was not lack of goodwill that prevented him from carrying out their plans for a restoration, but lack of power. But Napoleon had always been successful and it was not easy for anyone to imagine that he should ever fail.

One thing which the Poles would take from anyone was a constitution, and it was probable that a promise of one and evidence of the fulfillment of the promise would lead to the abandonment

38. Czartoryski, vol. II, 216.

39. *ibid.*, 218.

of Napoleon. Czartoryski says that to overweigh Napoleon's promises these things would be indispensable: "first, the restoration of the Constitution of May 3, 1791, which is graven in ineffaceable characters on all Polish hearts; second, the reunion of the whole of Poland under one sceptre; third, the re-establishment of outlets for trade; and fourth, a reasonable prospect of success against Napoleon."⁴⁰ Alexander's reply was that Poland would be forever united to Russia, whose Emperor would bear the title of Emperor of Russia and King of Poland. The Kingdom of Poland would be formed, in the first instance of the Duchy of Warsaw and the Russian provinces.⁴¹ With all of these plans in view and a number of prominent Poles at work on a constitution I cannot help but think that Alexander was sincere. Their labors were interrupted by the approach of Napoleon's troops, when the inevitable rupture between Russia and France burst into open warfare.

40. Memoirs of Czartoryski, Vol. II, 220.

41. ibid., 226.

IV. The Breach of 1812

In 1811 Oginski passed through the Grand Duchy of Warsaw and reported that it was a picture of misery and distress.¹ Beautiful Poland which had once supported flourishing fields of grain was now a scene of ruin, and many estates had been abandoned. The military spirit of Napoleon seized the people and they ardently desired war. After carefully investigating the situation around Vilna, Oginski came to the conclusion that Napoleon was looking toward a world empire, and the first occasion for a rupture with Russia would be welcomed.² If that was the case it is doubtful whether Napoleon would have taken time to notice Poland. More than likely, he would continue to hold out offers to Poland until his object had been obtained, and then he would be too strong to be resisted by the Poles. Poland would be a taunt to Russia in the coming war, and once the Poles were with him, he would be their master. Oginski was certain that he would not re-establish the kingdom, but if such a thing came to pass, Poland would not be a free, powerful, and independent country, because that was not in accordance with his principles nor with the plan which he had hitherto followed.³ What was more probable was that the Poles would have a king of Napoleon's choice and that instead of making their own laws they would find a Code Napoleon in force; instead of gaining back their ancient rights and privileges they would be making contributions to the French

1. Mémoires de Michel Oginski, Vol. III, 23.

2. ibid., 24.

3. ibid., 25.

government. The kingdom of Poland, instead of becoming again a power in Europe, would be more crushed than ever; national character would become demoralized and a long series of uninterrupted wars with Russia would reduce the country to a situation where no hope could ever be entertained of a restored national existence.

Alexander felt that a war was coming, but he did not intend to be the one to attack. Oginski tried to persuade him to attach Lithuania to the Duchy of Warsaw and declare it a kingdom under Russia, but the Tsar knew that this would provoke war. It was suggested in place of that project that the eight governments in Russia, which were a part of old Poland, be united under the name of Lithuania⁴. As Napoleon had Poles who were working on the possibility of a restoration, so now Alexander had in formation a plan first to give his Polish subjects a government and then eventually to unite the provinces outside of Russia with Lithuania and declare the kingdom of Poland restored. If his own Poles were happy and contented then it would be safe for him to look to those outside of Poland. The Tsar listened very attentively to all the plans that were proposed, but he was interrupted in carrying them out by the approach of Napoleon. The articles submitted, had they been put into effect, would certainly have won many aspirants to Alexander's side. The eight provinces in Lithuania would be formed into a single province under the name of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania which would be ruled by a governor whose residence would be at Vilna. There would be a

4. Memoires de Michel Oginski, vol. III, 41.

chancellor named by the Lithuanians for the direction of public affairs. The interior administration would be conducted by a council of administration presided over by the governor or lieutenant of the emperor, the council being formed of several departments. There were to be general regulations for public administration. The contributions to the government, levying of troops, and administration of justice were to be controlled by the Grand Duchy. The statute of Lithuania would continue to be the civil law of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the language used was to be Polish. The funds for public instruction were to be separate from all other branches of public revenue.⁵

In spite of the fact that Napoleon was rapidly advancing into Russian territory Oginski addressed a memoir to Alexander in which he recited the past policy of Napoleon toward the Poles. The Poles had been wiped off the map of Europe, but they had ever retained their national spirit, and this spirit would be crushed forever by Napoleon if it became his advantage to do so. The Poles did not care any more for Napoleon than was involved in the hope of regaining their country by his aid, and if he showed any great signs of weakening, he would be abandoned. He needed their services now and he would try to keep them near to him. He knew that once the people of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw might become hostile to him, the Poles of Austria and Prussia would unite with them, and if Alexander should create a Grand Duchy of Lithuania he himself would lose some of his hold over them. Those residing outside of Russia would demand a constitution similar to that of

5. Memoires de Michel Oginski, vol. III, 77-80.

Lithuania and the right to use their own language. The Austrian Poles, while not badly treated, were constantly rebuffed by the new order of things; customs and laws which seemed impositions were constantly interrupting their old habits. The Prussian Poles were forced to drop everything pertaining to their country and to become German as rapidly as they could.⁶ Without a doubt had the Tsar had an opportunity to complete his plans, Napoleon would have found a Polish army not waiting to join him but waiting to oppose his passage through their territory. All the enthusiasm excited by Napoleon might pass to Alexander and the Grand Duchies of Warsaw and Lithuania in that event would be united and the throne of Poland re-established under one sceptre.⁷ Oginski felt that if Alexander should start the war he would surely have the support of the Poles. Napoleon expected Alexander to prevent the establishment of Poland on the part of France, but he was not expecting to plan a restoration, for at the treaty of Tilsit the Tsar was loath to give up any of his territory acquired by the partitions of Poland. The longer Alexander hesitated the more Napoleon gained. But Napoleon had already advanced into Polish territory and was making brilliant promises to the Poles.

Napoleon had heard through reports sent to him from Vilna that the Emperor of Russia was seeking to attach himself to the Poles of the Russian provinces by benefices and conciliatory measures. The French Emperor therefore gave the impression that

6. Mémoires De Michel Oginski, vol. III, 97.

7. ibid., 103.

he was about to declare Poland independent, but these proceedings of Alexander made it more urgent that he should do so.⁸ He appointed Talleyrand to carry on negotiations but the prince divulged the plans thus making it necessary to postpone further action until after an alliance with Austria. Accordingly in March, a secret alliance with Austria was contracted, and Austria, as well as Prussia, with whom an alliance had been concluded in February, agreed to give up their Polish provinces for the restored Poland if Napoleon should re-establish it. They were to receive an indemnity out of the territory that would be conquered in the war.⁹ Too much emphasis cannot be laid on this statement, for Napoleonn, at St. Helena, said that this had been his plan. After events have happened and gone contrary to our expectations we can make ourselves believe that we expected to do differently.

With these treaties made, Napoleon was ready to receive the obeisances of the Poles. To the deputation from Vilna he said that if he had been reigning when the first, second, and third partitions took place, he would have armed all his people to deliver the Poles. With a dramatic outbreak which carried with him all the members of the deputation he said, "I love the Poles; for sixteen years I have seen your soldiers at my side on the fields of Italy and on those of Spain. I hold the same policy toward you that I held at my first appearance in Poland."¹⁰ He had formerly been successful in instilling into the Poles a con-

8. Jomini, Life of Napoleon I, vol. III, 336.

9. Correspondence de Napoléon, vol. XXXII, 359.

10. ibid., vol. XXIV, 62.

didential and trustful feeling. Now again when he met them, he carried them away at the outset by the brilliant prospects before them. Had he been intending to restore Poland, he could have done so before, but he eluded that part of the agreement whenever it came up. Bourrienne says that Napoleon previous to entering on this last campaign had never entertained any positive wish to re-establish Poland, though at a previous period he had been strongly inclined to that re-establishment of which he felt the necessity. When Napoleon was in Egypt he had had the distress of the Poles keenly at heart and at the beginning of the consulate, in spite of the many things occupying his attention, he had considered that measure.¹¹

No doubt Napoleon may at one time have considered the restoration of Poland, but at vilna in 1812 that idea was farthest from his mind. He knew that Alexander was conciliating the people of Lithuania and the other provinces, and he also knew that he could have gained a very loyal support had he said the word that would unite Poland. But the treaties with Prussia and Austria guaranteed aid without committing himself to ^{giving} any promises to the Poles. The president of the deputation demanded "in the interests of his empire as well as the honor of France" that he restore Poland. His reply was evasive. If he were a Pole he would think and act as they did; situated as he was he had many duties to perform.¹² He told them that if their efforts were unanimous their enemy would acknowledge their rights. He had

11. Bourrienne, Memoirs of Napoleon Bonaparte, vol. III, 177.

12. ibid., 244.

guaranteed to the Emperor of Austria the integrity of his domains and he could not do anything that would disturb his quiet possession of his present Polish territories.¹³ How careful Napoleon was to guarantee the rights of the Austrian emperor before he should meet with the Poles! The members of the deputation were very greatly disappointed that he would promise no more even at a time when their services were required. His war with Russia had been hailed as the advent of their liberty, and the enthusiasm of the inhabitants of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw had been unbounded, for they believed their country about to receive its ancient glory and independence. Their ardor was somewhat cooled after Napoleon's reply, and those Lithuanians who had been inclined to aid the French Emperor now became hostile. Indeed Napoleon told his army, on entering Lithuania, that they were in the enemy's country. Instead of trying to conciliate the Polish people in the province, he did everything to provoke them. Villages were burned, castles pillaged, and provisions carried away. The crops in the fields were laid waste, meadows devastated and people insulted. In spite of this ill treatment, however, many volunteers joined his army. At Minsk and Vilna especially, he was rather joyfully received, but this^{was} because the report had been circulated by his officers that Poland was to be re-established. However, the class of people with whom he had to negotiate were very cool and reserved. They could not forget his numerous proclamations, his broken promises, and his declaration that Lithuania was an enemy's country.¹⁴ The provinces of Podolia and Volhy-

13. Bourrienne, Memoirs of Napoleon Bonaparte, vol. III, 244.

14. ibid., 245.

nia were perfectly quiet and awaited passively the outcome of the war.

Before proceeding farther it might be profitable to examine the secret treaties of Napoleon with Austria and Prussia as Oginski gives them. The Emperor of the French had been incurring the hostility of the Germans and the Dutch by arranging their affairs to suit himself. In 1811, he began negotiations and 1812 a treaty with the Prussians was agreed upon. The clause in which we are particularly interested is the one directed against Russia. By a secret convention, the King of Prussia agreed to furnish a contingent of twenty thousand men having sixty cannon besides those in the garrisons and the fortresses. Prussian Poles were thus bound to serve with Napoleon, who ensured to himself the aid of at least part of the Polish people without restoring their kingdom. In March of 1812, a like treaty was signed with Austria; in this treaty, however, Napoleon guaranteed to Austria the possession of Galicia even in case of the restoration of Poland. But another article provided that if Napoleon should see fit to restore Poland, a part of Galicia could be taken and Illyrian provinces given in exchange. The partition of the province was to be made on the basis of population, extent, and revenue.¹⁵

With the same careful procedure but perhaps not with the same skill and tact, Napoleon opened hostilities with Alexander. In trying to conciliate the Poles he had incurred their distrust, and in the same unreliable manner he tried to win it back again.

15. Memoires de Michel Oginski, vol. III, 126.

We can understand fully why, situated as he was under the two treaties with Prussia and Austria, he could not think of restoring the old Polish kingdom. His marriage with the Austrian princess necessitated his being on good terms with Austria. The reasons for opening war with Russia were the laxness of Alexander's policy in the continental system and the annulment of the treaty of Tilsit; the protestation of the Tsar against the re-union of ^{the} Duchy of Oldenburg to France; and finally he claimed that Alexander had been arming since the commencement of 1811 and had placed five divisions on the frontiers of the Duchy of Warsaw. Such an act on Alexander's part could not be counted otherwise than hostile from Napoleon's point of view, and he pretended to be very angry, but on the other hand he was only too glad of a break. Napoleon could not long be friends with anyone without becoming domineering; and in his friendship with Alexander he was beginning to be anxious to have the upper hand. Once Alexander had been called the most powerful monarch in Europe, and Napoleon was very glad to be recognized by him. The "Star of Destiny" guided the Emperor on and he soon coveted the place of the Tsar and made plans to usurp it.

In answer to Napoleon, Russia demanded that the French evacuate Prussia, for it was necessary for the good feeling of France and Russia that a neutral power be between them and that the garrison in Dantzic be reduced.¹⁷ Other demands not touching Poland or Russia were made, and on the refusal of France, the Russian ambassador obtained his passports and left Paris. Napo-

17. Mémoires de Michel Oginski, Vol. III, 133.

eon left for Dresden and after interviewing the king of Prussia and the Emperor of Austria he hastened to Thorn where he arrived on June 5, 1812. The French ambassador, even on the plea of a personal communication, was not allowed to enter Vilna whither the Tsar had gone after Napoleon's refusal to accede to the demands,¹⁸ and he was given his passports. The French troops were already approaching the frontiers of Russia. Italians, Austrians, Saxons, Bavarians, Prussians, and seventy thousand Poles, besides the French, composed Napoleon's troops. The Poles assembled on the Vistula, and grand preparations were made for an enormous campaign.¹⁹

On the Russian side, plans were carefully laid, and the greatest tranquility reigned at St. Petersburg; one would hardly have thought that a great war was approaching. The public was ignorant of all that was passing on the other side of the Vistula because communications with the Duchy of Warsaw were interrupted. Since the departure of the Tsar for Vilna, each new event which threatened a rupture of peace did not reach St. Petersburg, and the reason that Alexander had gone to Vilna was to secure peace by negotiation. Alexander was very agreeable to the Lithuanian nobles and he had a most careful regard for his new Polish subjects, taking pains to decorate some of them with the order of St. Anne. At court it was noised about that the Emperor Alexander was going to declare himself king of Poland.²⁰ This was part of a note sent to Napoleon. Almost everything in the note

18. Mémoires de Michel Oginski, vol. III, 135.

19. ibid., 147.

20. ibid., 148. Note quoted from a manuscript of 1812 by Baron Fain, vol. I, 73-74.

was untrue but it aroused Napoleon who hastened his moves on Russia. Oginski left St. Petersburg for Vilna in June, and was very much surprised to see the strong patrols of French on the frontiers of Warsaw.

He was well pleased with the conduct of the Lithuanians toward him and their enthusiasm for him. He needed men for the army and as a proof of his confidence in them he was going to name a committee composed of Poles to make a repartition of the proprietaries given up.²¹ He found it necessary to give up several plans on account of the lack of time to carry them out, and because Napoleon's emissaries had worked up the people to such a pitch that care must be taken in conciliating them. Word was received just after the interview with Oginski that Napoleon had crossed the Niemen.²²

After the news of the crossing of the Niemen, Alexander held a conference with his officers. One of these officers, General Armfeldt, said that the suffering of the Poles during the war would be enormous. The plan of campaign was retreat, in order to draw Napoleon from his source of supplies. Napoleon occupied several Polish villages. To his soldiers he said, "Soldiers, the second war of Poland has commenced. The first was ended at Friedland and at Tilsit. The second war of Poland will be more glorious to the arms of France than the first."²³ There was no mention of Poland and the Poles in connection with a restoration. Every

21. Mémoires de Michel Oginski, vol. III, 152.

22. ibid., 157. As Oginski gives the fullest and most connected account of the campaign in Russia and also the clearest presentation of the attitude of the Poles, information taken from his book is used mainly in what follows.

23. Correspondence de Napoléon, vol. XXIII, 529.

word was uttered to stimulate them on to glory for France, motivated by his own selfish purposes. How could the inhabitants of Lithuania respect his declared purpose when they had been so basely insulted! It was inevitable that Lithuania should become the theatre of the war, for Napoleon was working for the alliance of the Poles in that province against the conciliations and proposals offered by Alexander. A great obstacle in his way, as we have seen, was the restrained conservatism of the nobles, who remembered his unredeemed promises to the inhabitants of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw.

Directly that Napoleon crossed the Niemen communications with Lithuania were interrupted. April 10, 1812, the king of Saxony as Grand Duke of Warsaw issued a decree in which he ordered a national guard to be formed of all the men from twenty to forty years of age. A consulship was created to take charge of all the affairs that the constitution gave to the sovereign. June 26, Prince Adam Casimir Czartoryski, the father of Prince Adam, proclaimed the restoration of the whole of ancient Poland as an independent state. All officers, soldiers, and employees, civil or military, who were born Poles, were called upon to leave the Russian service.²⁴ A general council of twelve members was invested with all of the duties of the confederation, and the King of Saxony, invited by a deputation of the council general to adhere to the confederation, signed an act of accession, July 12. Another deputation made known to Napoleon their decisions, and informed him that it was to the interest of France that the

24. Mémoires de Michel Oginski, Vol. III, 199.

re-establishment of Poland be accomplished. The Poles further reminded him of his past promises and said that if the partitions of Poland were a sign of the decadence of France, then the restoration of the kingdom should be a sign of her prosperity. Always had Poland turned her eyes toward France and regarded her as a great and generous nation.²⁵ To this Napoleon made reply that as always he loved the Poles; he himself had a great interest in the country but he was so occupied with other affairs and had so many interests to combine and conciliate that he could not turn his attention toward restoring Poland, and as before on great occasions of meeting with the Poles, he flattered them by his terms of praise and by regretting that he could not do differently. The deputation returned to the Diet disheartened by his evasive replies, but nevertheless it declared the restoration of Poland. Napoleon had a different plan of organization in mind for Lithuania, and it is doubtful whether he would have united it to the Grand Duchy of Warsaw. His former policies suggest that he would have found some excuse to keep it separate.²⁶ Different writers have different opinions as to the enthusiasm of the Poles. Oginski tells us that the Poles in the Grand Duchy of Warsaw were exceedingly enthusiastic about a restored Poland but he also leads us to infer that the Lithuanians were just as enthusiastic about the restoration of Poland. He informed the Tsar that if he did not change conditions in that province, a revolt was likely to ensue. Indeed, he feared that they would rise up against Russia

25. Mémoires de Michel Oginski, vol. III, 200.

26. ibid., 203.

when Napoleon came to the frontiers. General Marbot, an officer in the French army, gives us another point of view. According to his observations, the people in the Grand Duchy of Warsaw were the only ones who had retained their spirit of nationality and their hopes for independence. Lithuania and the other provinces of ancient Poland, having been under Russian rule for so long, had lost entirely their remembrance of their old constitution, and considered themselves Russians. The Poles in Prussia and Austria went to war because of fear of their new sovereigns.²⁷ They showed no enthusiasm whatever for Napoleon. The inhabitants of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw were the only ones who were at all attached to Napoleon, but Marbot asks us "Of what use was so small a state for the grand army of Napoleon?"²⁷ Marbot also assures us that Napoleon's reluctance was ^{not that he} was afraid of their joining Russia if he did not re-establish Poland but because ^{of} their inconstancy to him should he restore Poland to independence. He would recognize them as a nation only when they were unanimously striving side by side for restoration. Not long before, an army of a certain number of men was the price they must pay for recognition. Napoleon was coolly treated in Vilna; had the Poles shown some enthusiasm and some trust they might perhaps have recovered their independence.²⁸ But the Poles were not sure ^{of} Napoleon, however they might treat him, and to say that they would perhaps have received their independence had they treated him better is chimerical. Napoleon's ^{mode of} entrance into Lithuania did not call for

27. Mémoires du Général de Marbot, Vol. III, 52.

28. ibid., 62.

honorable treatment and the Poles are not to be blamed for their lack of hospitality.

Having occupied Vilna, Napoleon issued orders for a new form of government for Lithuania. A provisional government composed of seven members and a secretary general was provided for Lithuania. Each of the governments of Vilna, Grodno, Minsk and Bialystok^{was} to be presided over by an intendant. For Vilna there was a mayor, four adjoints and a municipal council composed of twelve members. A national guard composed of two battalions was created. Officers occupying the various positions were Poles. Throughout the country all who had left their homes when troops marched through could return to them. The officers of the district were to keep good order and protect the peasants from injury or exaction. By September, a president of the provisionary commission, the count of Hogendorp, had been appointed. Davout maintained a strict discipline and by artful means succeeded in attaching a great many to his person. Some of the Poles believed that he would be king of a reunited Poland.²⁹ While Davout kept a strict account of the military affairs, Hogendorp was no less faithful in civil affairs. How could Napoleon ever hope to conciliate the Lithuanians when he placed such a man as the president of the commission over them! Perhaps he did not care to conciliate them. His one thought was the glory of France and his own splendor, and such a thing as a restless discontented people under his rule did not trouble him. If Napoleon had intended to unite Lithuania to the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, it seems that the time to have done so was at

29. Mémoires de Michel Oginski, Vol. III, 215.

his occupation, but his separate organization of that province is almost convincing proof that he did not intend that the two should be united.

Early in October of 1812, Alexander sent a communication to Oginski, the substance of which was his declaration to re-establish Poland. Oginski was instructed to tell the Poles that the Tsar relied on the confidence and help of the Poles who had been coaxed away by Napoleon. A great many victories of the French arms had been won by the valuable aid of ^{the} Poles and now as before Napoleon needed the Poles, and needed them badly. Alexander was urged to declare himself King of Poland, as both Oginski and Czartoryski thought that this was the surest way to attach the Poles to Russia.³⁰ The Poles would leave the French arms and come to the support of their own nation and Russia. No other country in Europe, unless it were Austria, would oppose very strenuously the independence of Poland. All Russians would regard the restoration of Poland as an honorable termination of the war. The protection of the Tsar extended over all classes would prevent terror and persecution. To these requests an answer might have been given when he appointed Koutousoff as head of the Russian army. In the outline of his plan the Tsar could say that Napoleon never intended to re-establish Poland. He was using the Poles to glorify France. Alexander always appreciated the Poles and honored their valor, their love, and their fidelity toward their country and their sovereign. Furthermore, it might be announced that Alexander had decided to restore Poland and to

30. Oginski, Vol. III, 227.

declare himself king. The union with Russia would be only in the person of the Tsar and his successors and their administration would be /separate and based on the Constitution of May 3, 1791. It was a good plan but the main obstacles in the way were the reverses of Russia. To declare Poland independent at this critical time, when the Russian army was retreating, would throw all the forces of Prussia and Austria into the arms of France. The Poles in Napoleon's service and those in Lithuania would likely be persecuted, and greater insults ^{would be} offered than before.

While all of these plans were in mind news reached St. Petersburg of the evacuation of Moscow by the Russians. The Tsar left for the front, but before he went granted an amnesty for the inhabitants of Lithuania and White Russia.³¹ Oginski was overjoyed for it seemed as if the clouds about the Grand Duchy of Warsaw were clearing away and the inhabitants could soon welcome their deliverer. The amnesty was regarded as a fore-runner of great events in Poland, and the emperor himself said, "As soon as our troops have occupied the Duchy of Warsaw, and we no longer fear the return of Napoleon, I will keep my promise."³² With this promise, Alexander instilled new life into the Poles and especially the inhabitants of Lithuania, who were greatly discouraged by the retreat of the Russian forces.

The Duchy of Warsaw had sent eighty thousand men to fight under the banners of Napoleon. Public and private misery raged in the Duchy and its army was maintained only by great privation

31. Oginski, Vol. III, 262.

32. *ibid.*, 266.

Everything seemed to be working against prosperity. The civil officers of the government could not be paid and the Continental System which had been rigidly enforced had stopped the exports of the country.³³ With everything in ruins, what would be left to the people of the Duchy if Poland were restored? Many of its farms were devastated by the passage of the armies over them, and whole villages were deserted. Famine reigned supreme and yet the army had to be supported. It is a great wonder that the Poles did not become greatly discouraged before this, but they seemed to place much confidence in Napoleon. In all the battles and sieges of the campaign of 1812 the Poles fought bravely and daringly. The intelligence of the Polish officers and the valor of the troops was highly commented upon; if it had not been for the Poles many of the strategic points would not have been taken.³⁴

By the end of 1812 Napoleon was retreating rapidly with the last remnants of his army over the Niemen with the Russians close to their heels. He no longer appeared as the deliverer of nations; his one desire was to remain a conqueror, and little zeal was displayed for the restoration of Poland.³⁵ With the opening of the new year new levies were made, and Napoleon once more called on the Grand Duchy of Warsaw for men; a sword and a horse was enough to stop the Russians, he said.³⁶ But the people of the Grand Duchy could do no more, and for Napoleon now to make brilliant promises was mockery and insult. As if not real-

33. Bourrienne, Memoirs of Napoleon Bonaparte, Vol. III, 246.

34. Oginski, Vol. IV, 12. (Note by the editor)

35. Cambridge Modern History, Vol. IX, 505.

36. Bourrienne, Memoirs of Napoleon Bonaparte, Vol. III, 247.
(Editor's note)

izing the distressed state of the Duchy, the council of government called for a levy, and an arrière-ban. The kingdom of Poland was declared restored and the citizens called to arms for the honor and glory of Poland. They had fought for other people and now they were to fight for themselves.³⁷ What a pity they had not made such a declaration before this! If only they could have understood that they had a friend in Alexander, the restoration might have been completed peacefully and without so much loss and ruin to Poland and her citizens. The Polish army evacuated Warsaw in February, 1813, and settled at Cracow where it remained until the first of May. The Russian army occupied Warsaw and^a supreme council of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw was established under Russian auspices and remained in power until the close of the war.³⁸

In the meantime, negotiations between Prussia and Russia resulted in a treaty of alliance in March, 1813. Negotiations were slow, because Russia demanded a large part of Polish territory formerly Prussian, but this obstacle was overcome and Prussia was promised an indemnity in Northern Germany.³⁹ Fighting was renewed and Alexander kept in touch with the Poles. In May Czartoryski wrote that the Prussian king was not at all opposed to the existence of Poland for he felt the necessity of satisfying the wishes of the Polish nation and considered these just and reasonable.⁴⁰ In June of 1813 the powers agreed to an armistice. Through Austrian mediation a peace was arranged and

37. Oginski, Vol. IV, 56.

38. *ibid.*, 103.

39. Cambridge Modern History, Vol. IX, 513.

40. Czartoryski, Vol. II, 237.

it was suggested that the Grand Duchy of Warsaw be abolished and that affairs should be set in order without the intervention of France. The Emperor of Russia considered himself entitled to dispose of the whole of the Duchy of Warsaw and all its fortresses on the grounds that his troops had first occupied the Duchy. He meant, as an act of grace and favor, to assign to Prussia the city and territory of Dantzic.⁴¹ Napoleon could not accept these terms, for he had not given up his idea of a universal empire. Austria had been arming during the short interval, and in August she joined the allies against Napoleon. In all of the battles, the Poles of the Grand Duchy who were with Napoleon were in the thickest of the fight. Napoleon met with reverses, and on March 31, 1814, the capitulation of Paris was signed.⁴² An article in the treaty of Fontainebleau provided that all the Polish troops in French service ^{might} return home taking with them their arms, as a memory of their honorable services; all the officers were to be allowed to retain the honors awarded them and the accompanying pensions.⁴³

Napoleon was no longer connected with the question of Poland. For a long time before this, in fact since 1807 at the Peace of Tilsit, he had ceased to be interested in it except as a means to an end, and that end, his own glorification. The benevolent attitude of the Powers was shown in allowing the Poles to return home, but what was to be done with them, and how they were to be treated as a nation had to be left until the final settlement. Now that Napoleon had disappeared from European affairs, the Poles turned

41. State Papers, 1814-1815, Vol. II, 1175.

42. Oginski, Vol. IV, 131.

43. ibid., 137.

to Alexander as their deliverer, and we shall see that the Tsar strove to keep his promise to the ever hopeful Poles.

V. The Fate of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw

As Decided at the Congress of Vienna, 1815

At the end of the war in 1814, Alexander had again taken the lead in Europe and it seemed that the Poles would profit by his favor. It was decided that a Congress of the Powers should meet at Vienna to rearrange the affairs of Europe after so many years of disturbance. The question of settling such an important problem was more intricate than had been imagined, and various difficulties came up to hinder any rapid progress. Great territorial changes had to be made and the Congress came near to having a war about the settlement. It had no formal opening and the powers negotiated long and vigorously. Alexander thought that he should be allowed to find compensation for his part in overthrowing Napoleon in Poland, while Prussia and Austria should find theirs in northern Germany and in Italy.¹ Russia's position in the Congress was strong and her recent successes seemed to remove all obstacles out of the way of her appropriation of the whole of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw. Alexander had firmly in mind the establishment of an independent Poland, but he agreed that the Grand Duchy, which must form the nucleus of the independent kingdom, should be divided among the three powers.² No doubt he thought of securing the larger share. England at first was very favorable to the re-establishment of Poland, but as time went on, her policy changed also and she agreed that the Grand Duchy of Warsaw must be divided and that the military frontiers necessary

1. Cambridge Modern History, Vol. IX, 590.

to the security of Austria and Prussia be established. Alexander revealed an offer of concessions in Poland made by Metternich in return for which he was to keep Prussia out of Saxony.

While all of these disputes were going on, news reached Vienna that the Grand Duke Constantine, who had been sent to Warsaw to organize a Polish army, had issued a proclamation in which he called upon the Poles to arm for the defense of their country and their independence. "His Majesty, the Emperor, Alexander, your powerful protector, made that call to you. Assemble yourselves around the flag; arm yourselves for the defense of your country and for the maintenance of its political independence. While that noble monarch prepares for happiness to come to your country rise up and support his noble efforts with the price of your blood. The same leaders who for twenty years led you on the path to glory know how to lead you to it now. The emperor appreciates your bravery. In the midst of the disasters of a melancholy war, he saw your honorable service in meeting emergencies which depend on you. You have displayed great deeds with arms in a struggle to which motive you were a stranger."³ With such a proclamation the Poles were called to arms and the Tsar was judged to have taken his final stand on the Polish question. Castlereagh in writing to Alexander to be careful of the degree and mode of aggrandizement of the Polish frontier said, "I should press these considerations with more reluctance if I did not feel persuaded that there is a course open

2. Cambridge Modern History, Vol. IX, 591.

3. Oginski, Vol. IV, 184.

to your Imperial Majesty to pursue which will combine your beneficent intentions toward your Polish subjects, with what your allies and Europe, Sire, claim at your hands. They desire not to see the Poles humiliated or deprived of a wide conciliatory and congenial system of administration. They only wish, Sire, for the sake of peace, to ameliorate gradually the frame of your Polish administration and to avoid, if you are not prepared for the complete reunion and independence of Poland, that species of measure, which, under a title of higher import, may create alarm both in Russia and the neighboring States, and which, however it may gratify the ambitions of a few individuals of great family in Poland, may, in fact, bring less real happiness and liberty to the people than a more measured, and unostentatious change in the system of their administration."⁴ Here we may surmise, Castlereagh was hinting at any influence which men like Czartoryski or Oginski may have had on the Tsar. He in a way acknowledges the powerful position of Russia and wishes to avoid a disaster to Russia's hopes. In other words, he was warning Alexander in a conservative manner, against too hurried liberal measures.

After many disputes and fears and threats of war, a treaty was agreed upon. Austria recovered all her Polish possessions obtained by the first partition except Cracow which was declared a free city. Prussia obtained the larger part of her former Polish domains after the first partition and the fortress of Thorn which Alexander yielded at the last moment. The rest of Poland

4. State Papers, 1814--1815, Vol. II, 1174--1175.

went to Russia.⁵ Thus the hopes of the Poles were again dashed to the ground. But affairs were not to remain quiet, for Napoleon returned to France and the Powers were called forth to drive the Corsican finally from Europe. For one hundred days people were held in suspense wondering who would be conqueror, but Napoleon's faculties had failed him, his Star of Destiny had waned, and he was overcome at Waterloo. Late in May of 1815, the Powers again agreed to a Final Act which should settle the conditions in Europe for all time. The greater part of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw was secured to Russia under the title of the Kingdom of Poland and such representative national institutions were to be allowed as the government of Russia might determine. Before the Tsar left Vienna he laid down the bases of the future Constitution of Poland. Prussia's share of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw included the fortress of Thorn with the surrounding territory, her Polish acquisitions of 1772 and portions of the departments of Posen and Kalisch. Austria remained in possession of the parts of Galicia obtained by the Peace of Vienna in 1806, and of the salt mines of Wiliezska.⁶

Oginski in his memoirs gives us a sketch of the most interesting provisions of the Treaty of Vienna. "The Duchy of Warsaw is united to the empire of Russia, forever. A part of this country having a population of eight hundred and ten thousand souls will be possessed by the King of Prussia. The part of eastern

5. Cambridge Modern History, Vol. IX, 598.

6. ibid., 655.

Galicia which was ceded to Russia in 1809, also that of the proprietary of Wieliczka, will be given to Austria. The city of Cracow will form a free and independent republic."⁶ Treaties between Russia and Austria and Prussia were signed with reference to the Polish territories and one article provided that the Polish subjects of the high contracting parties should have national representation and national institutions. Amnesties were granted and all Polish subjects were invited to return to their homes. Cracow was given a constitution, the chief provisions of which were: that the Catholic religion, Apostolic and Roman, was to be maintained as the common religion of the country and all Christian creeds were to be free; all citizens were to be equal before the law, and the law was to protect equally even those of the tolerated creeds; the government of the free city of Cracow and its territory was to consist of a senate composed of twelve members called senators, and a president. Nine were to be elected by an assembly of representatives, the remaining four to be chosen by the chapter and the academy; six of these senators were to hold office for life; the president was to serve three years and could be reelected. The rest of the senators were to change office every year; the assembly of representatives was to meet once a year.⁷ Cracow remained independent until 1846, at which time she was annexed by Austria.

On May 25, 1815, Alexander issued a proclamation to the Poles, in which he spoke of the past war and said that the conceptions

6. Oginski, Vol. IV, 185.

7. *ibid.*, 196.

now prevailing in the world were to restore nations to their own rights and to introduce free and liberal ideas. The Congress of Vienna had been organized to give peace to Europe and to erase the calamities of war. A medal of gold was presented to Alexander by the Polish Diet for his efforts in the restoration of Poland.⁸ The province of Lithuania was left to Alexander. On December 1, 1815, the Tsar signed the constitution of Poland at Warsaw. The main provisions embodied in this document were: that the kingdom of Poland was to be forever united to the empire of Russia, and the crown of Poland to be hereditary in the person of the emperor and his successors following the order of succession established for the Imperial throne of Russia, but the sovereign alone should have the right to determine the participation of Poland in the wars of Russia. That the Catholic religion would be the religion of the kingdom but other religions would be tolerated. Freedom of the press was guaranteed and everyone was equal before the law. The Polish nation was to have a national representation to consist of a Diet composed of a king and two chambers, the first to be a senate and the second a house of deputies of the communes. All government was to reside in the person of the king who should name the senators, ministers, counsellors of state and the presidents and judges of the different tribunals. The execution to the laws was to be confined to the diverse branches of public administration. The Diet was to deliberate on all pro-

8. Oginski, Vol. IV, 217.

jects of law civil and criminal and administrative alike, which might be addressed to it by the council of State on the part of the King. The army was to retain its national uniform.⁹ If these provisions had been carried out the Poles would have had little reason to regret their state as settled by the Congress of the Powers at Vienna. Alexander told them that their restoration was definitely settled by a solemn treaty, sanctioned by a constitutional charter and Poland now had a place among the nations of Europe.

The Polish people were not as free as they wished to be. All of their external relations were jealously watched by Russia and the constitution provided that the nation should not enter into a war without the Tsar's consent. One promise of Alexander either was not or could not be fulfilled and that was the plan for uniting the provinces of Lithuania with those of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw into one kingdom. Kosciuscko reminded the Tsar of this promise. Without a doubt, Prussia and Austria stood in the way of this union, and apparently England also, for Castlereagh's letter seemed to be hinting that the Tsar must not make too much of an aggrandizement of territory on the part of Russia, and of granting too much to the Poles in order to satisfy one or two individuals. The courts of Europe feared a strong and powerful Poland. Their interests changed with the change of circumstances against them. For Prussia and Austria to give up their Polish territory to the new Kingdom would have been almost like giving it to Russia. Alexander had declared himself king of

Poland; and this territory would have been under his sceptre, thus making a great enlargement to his domain extending into Western Europe. Czartoryski leads us to believe that the trouble about uniting all the Polish provinces was caused by Castlereagh's letter, in which as has been quoted, he hinted at the great sacrifice of Russia.¹⁰ Czartoryski also denies that the Poles would be more dangerous if given their freedom, as some seemed to think; and, if the kingdom were restored, any attempt on the part of Russia to recover it would be opposed by Prussia, Austria, and France.¹¹

The work of the Congress of Vienna had in a very unsatisfactory way fulfilled the hopes of the Poles for the restoration in its entirety of their ancient kingdom, but with the Grand Duchy of Warsaw united to Russia and a constitution granted they were willing to do their part toward keeping the peace. From all the evidence Alexander seems to have wished to keep his promises of a restored and independent Poland, and after 1815, he claims to have had the interests of the Poles at heart. From an out of the way place in the world, St. Helena, echoes of Napoleon's desires for Poland have come to light in his correspondence. He said that he called on Poland but she did not respond. It was his greatest hope to establish the kingdom of Poland as a fort and a strong barrier against the incessant ambitions of the Tsars.¹² Could it be that he had forgotten how faithfully Poland

9. Oginski, Vol. IV, 217.

10. Czartoryski, Vol. II, 284.

11. *ibid.*, 287.

12. Correspondence de Napoleon I^{er}, Vol. XXXII, 358.

had always responded to his bugle call and could he fail to understand that he had overloaded the people with evasive replies and unredeemed promises? It was his plan to take Galicia from Austria and indemnify that country elsewhere.¹³ We know from his treaty with Austria in 1812 that he had said this, but his word was not to be trusted. He offered to make great sacrifices of French territory to indemnify Russia also, if she would consent to give up her Polish territories for the restoration of the ancient kingdom of Poland. He even thought at one time of putting the crown of Poland on the head of the King of Prussia, but after her reverses, in 1807, Prussia showed such a hatred for France that Napoleon formed the Grand Duchy of Warsaw instead.¹⁴ This does not harmonize very well with his actions at the Treaty of Tilsit, when Alexander had to interfere on behalf of Prussia, nor with the fact that the Grand Duchy was offered to Russia. He remarked that he did too much for Poland and indeed he did, in the way of ruining the country and crushing the hopes of the people. He hoped after the treaty of 1807 to restore Poland, but the idea never entered his head to claim the throne either for himself or his family.¹⁵

Too much weight cannot be put on these statements, that came after Napoleon had been away from Europe and had heard what was done. It cannot be said that he did not intend to help the Poles nor that he never entertained the idea of restoring Poland

13. Correspondence de Napoléon I^{er}, Vol. XXXII, 275.

14. Ibid., 292.

15. ibid., 293.

to independence. Had he been successful in his campaign against Russia, he might in a moment of good humor have proclaimed the restoration of that kingdom, but it is doubtful whether, with his plan of a universal empire in mind, it would have long remained independent.

VI. The Poles Since 1815

Ever since the Poles, by the settlement at vienna in 1815, were left separated under different flags, the Polish spirit has been restless and unsatisfied. Alexander's promises as to a constitution were faithfully carried out, and the Polish Diet met for the first time in Warsaw in 1818.¹ One important fact to be noticed in connection with the Diet was that the liberum veto was abolished and a majority of votes decided all questions². But Alexander was soon occupied with other affairs and discontent sprang up in the new kingdom of Poland. Kosciuszko had prophesied that a different order of things from what they expected would come about, and that the Poles who had been given the chief places in the government would be crowded out by the Russians. He was right, and the Polish name quickly fell into disrepute and the people were treated with contempt. Liberty of the press was withdrawn in July, 1819, and other restrictions were put on their rights as defined by the constitution. The chief power was vested in the Grand Duke Constantine who had been appointed commander-in-chief of the army. He held the feelings of others as naught and gave most vigorous play to his violent and unjust contempt for the Poles. Revolution was slowly gathering. Nicholas, who succeeded Alexander in 1825, tried in every way possible to win back the favor of the Poles and to make them forget the policy of Russification which he had pursued immediately after his accession to the throne.¹ He came

1. Cambridge Modern History, vol. X, 456.

2. ibid., 464.

to need them just as Napoleon had needed them in 1812, for in 1828 he became involved in a war with Turkey. At the close of the successful war Turkish trophies were sent to the Polish army.

Another thing which increased the indignation of the Poles was the exposure of the Patriotic Society and the proceedings of the Court of the Diet.² A new secret association arose in Warsaw bearing the specific mark of a military conspiracy. The Poles obtained news that they were to be used in the campaign against France; and the promise of Alexander that Lithuania would be united to Poland was not to be fulfilled. The violations of their constitution and the broken promises aroused all Poland, so that even the students in the university and the patriots joined with the Polish army in the Revolution of 1830.³ The Poles fought bravely, but their affairs were badly managed by the Polish Commander-in-chief, Skrzyvecki. Poland fell once more into the hands of the Russians, and the constitutional kingdom ceased to exist.⁴ The language and religion were attacked and a rigorous attempt was made again to Russianize Poland.⁵ During the reign of Nicholas there was no alleviation of the terrible suppression. Alexander II was inclined to be more lenient in his treatment of the Poles. A separate ministry was created for education and religion, but discontent was brewing and secret societies again came into existence.⁶ The Russian government, suspecting a revo-

2. Cambridge Modern History, vol. X, 464.

3. ibid., 466.

4. ibid., 413.

5. Eversley, The Partitions of Poland, 292.

6. Cambridge Modern History, Vol. X, 628.

lution, sent all the young men whom they thought connected with the plot to Siberian and Caucasian military depots. A general insurrection followed; but there was no army to sustain an armed resistance, and the only hope for the Poles was in an intervention of the western powers, especially France and England. A diplomatic interference ensued in which England demanded that the conditions of the Treaty of Vienna be fulfilled. Alexander II replied that he had the most benevolent intentions toward the Poles. As neither France nor England was prepared to support the Polish cause by a war, while Bismarck maintained Prussia in an attitude of benevolent neutrality toward the Tsar, nothing more was done.⁷ The insurrection was not put down until 1864. The concessions of 1861 were withdrawn and Russification was carried to an extreme.⁸ The present emperor, Nicholas II, has adopted a more conciliatory attitude toward the Poles and the language is no longer forbidden in the churches and schools. The progress of Poland up to the present time has been very marked. Free trade is carried on between Russia and Poland; manufactories have grown up and the population has increased; and the better condition of the peasants seems to reconcile them to Russian rule.

At the outbreak of this present war Prussia, Austria, and Russia each bid for Polish support. Nicholas, Grand Duke of Russia, issued a proclamation to the Polish nation in which he promised that at the close of the present war Poland would be free. It is affirmed that progressive Russian society has long

7. Cambridge Modern History, Vol. A, 474.

8. Ibid., 629.

desired the freedom of Poland and that desire has now become a definite part of the program of the Russian nation.⁹ Poland looks to England and to Russia for aid and in gratification sends her people to help with the fighting. Polish legions have been formed, officered by Poles, and are now at the front in the thickest of the fight. Polish women administer comforts to Russians in the trenches. But other Polish legions with Polish officers are fighting on the Austrian side, while Germany and Austria are in possession of the entire territory formerly in the Grand Duchy together with most of Lithuania, and have set up a government there. Germans and Austrians have also promised the Poles the restoration of their kingdom. The Poles are actually fighting each other even as they did in Napoleon's days. Let us hope that the illusions and dreams that are now entertained by the Polish people may become real, and that once more they may have their cherished desire of being a free and independent nation. But may they know how to use this freedom and independence in such an intelligent manner that their neighbors will have no opportunity to take a part in their government, or to erase again its political existence.

9. Bariantinsky, Princess,, Poland's Ordeal and Poland's Hope. Contemporary Review, Vol. 108, 205.

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C. BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Bourrienne in his Memoirs of Napoleon Bonaparte faithfully recites the episodes connected with the French Emperor's relation with Poland. He does not confine himself to statements influenced by prejudice in Napoleon's favor, but he is inclined to be critical of some of Napoleon's activities connected with that country.

Czartoryski in his Memoirs and Correspondence with Alexander I shows how the Poles were treated at the court of St. Petersburg. Connected as he was with the Russian Imperial family, it is not surprising that he regarded doubtfully the aid that Napoleon offered. He was confident of the success of his own plans for Poland, and did not hesitate to bring them forth on any occasion. Without a doubt he was one of the most ardent patriots who ever worked for his country. He had many friends in the politically influential circle in England, and their correspondence with him reveals their deep regard for him. In spite of his international affiliations, Czartoryski never ceased to be a Pole.

Oginski was a very earnest worker on behalf of Poland. Many times he "felt the breath" of the French army when it invaded Russia in 1812. Oginski, as well as Czartoryski, was deeply interested in the restoration of Poland. His Mémoires contain a collection of many of the documents connected with the Polish provinces. He makes some very emphatic and uncomplimentary

statements about Napoleon and his motives. His interviews with Alexander and the letters written to the latter, are not as forcible as those of Czartoryski and show a less intimate personal relationship. His diction is dignified, and eager, yet forcible.

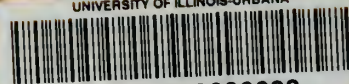
Fletcher gives a clear, condensed, and accurate account of the History of Poland from the earliest times down to the incorporation of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw in the Empire of Russia in 1815. He is sympathetic with the Poles, yet he feels that from the first they were to blame for their own downfall.

Eversley's The Partitions of Poland gives an account of the destruction of the kingdom from a British point of view. While it is clearly and accurately written it is colored with British ideas; especially the last chapter in which he speaks of Poland in connection with the Great War now going on.

Lord gives a short summary of Polish history before he begins his narration of The Second Partition of Poland. He recites the past glory of Poland and her downfall in a clear, concise way. He lays stress on the jealousy of the nobility and the lack of a middle class to intervene in the affairs of the Diet.

Sorel in L'Europe et la Révolution Française looks at the Polish question from all sides. He seems to be in sympathy with the Poles, and doubtful as to Napoleon's intention of restoring Poland. Napoleon was shrewd and Alexander was very liable to be over-influenced, but when once aroused he could fight to the death.

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